

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

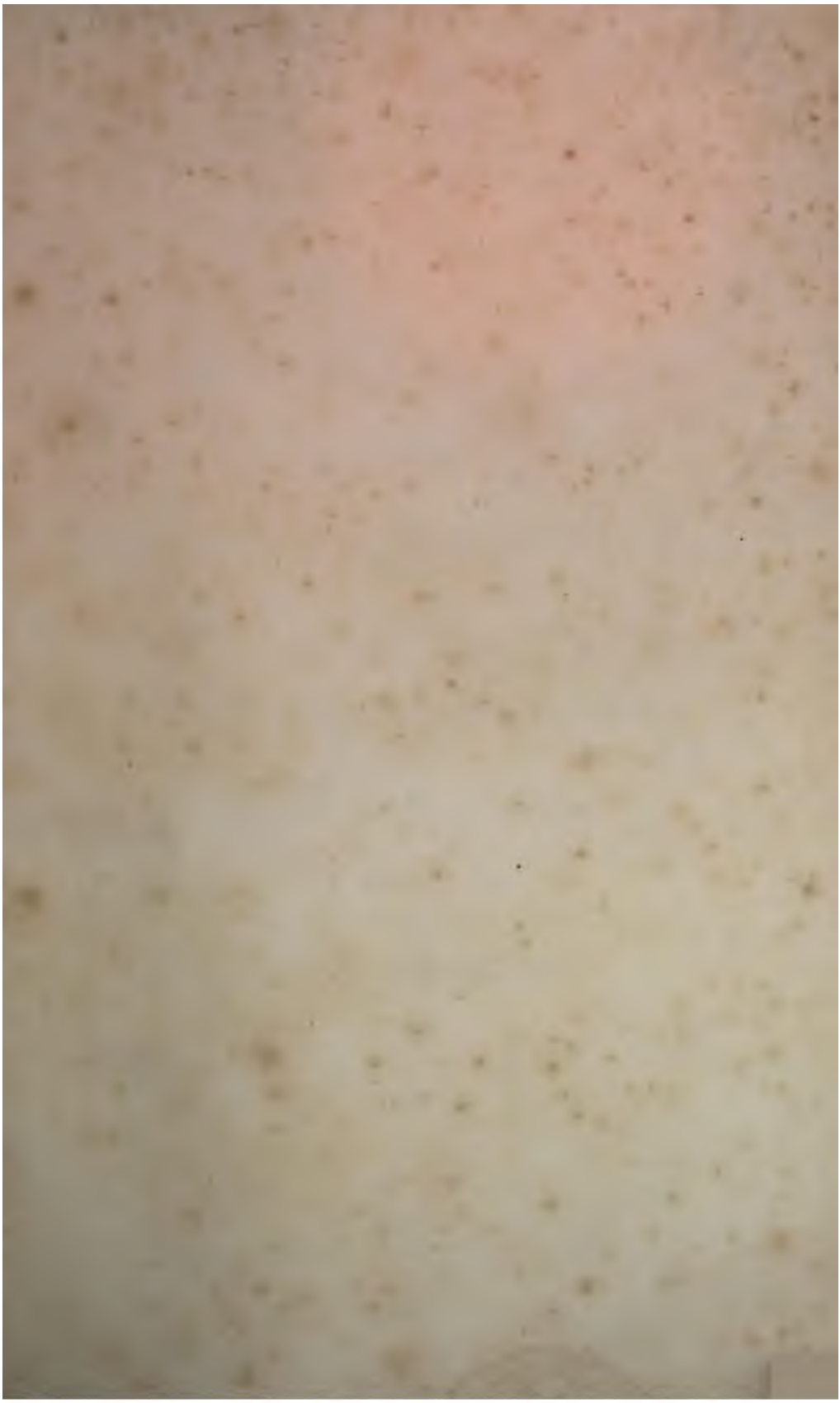
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`



Received by Mr. Rankin, 1844
Oct. 17, 1843.





THE

HISTORY

OF

IRELAND;

COMMENCING

WITH ITS EARLIEST PERIOD,

TO THE

GREAT EXPEDITION AGAINST

SCOTLAND IN 1545.

BY

THOMAS MOORE, ESQ.

PHILADELPHIA:
LEA & BLANCHARD.
1843.

DA933
M82
1843
v.1

NOTICE OF THE AMERICAN PUBLISHERS.

The present Volume of "Moore's Ireland" contains all that the author has written and published. As it may be a long time before it is concluded, the publishers beg to present this portion, embracing, as it does, the *Three* Volumes of the London Edition, with a promise of furnishing the remainder in the same style when published by the author.

Philadelphia,
May 1843.

GRIGGS & CO., PRINTERS.

ANALYTICAL AND CHRONOLOGICAL

TABLE

OF THE

HISTORY OF IRELAND.

CHAPTER I.

B. C.		Page
1000.	Celtic Origin of the Irish	25
	Different Fortunes of Ireland and Britain	25
	Phœnician Intercourse with the Irish	25
	The Belgæ, or Fir-bolgs	26
	Objections answered; Authority of Tacitus	26
	Homer's Knowledge of Isles beyond the Pillars from the Phœnician Voyagers	27
	The Argonautics; Ireland named Iernis	27
	A Work of the Age of Aristotle names the two chief British Isles, Albion and Ierne	27
	The Phœnicians keep their Trade secret	27
	The Western or Tin Isles first explored by the Massilian Greeks	27
	The Periplus of Hanno	27
	Characteristic Features of Ancient Ireland	28
	Inscription at Tangiers	28
	Authority of Herodotus	29
	Ancient Ireland better known than Britain; Authorities	29
	Geography of Ptolemy	29
	Tacitus; Life of Agricola	30
	Intercourse of Ireland with the Phœnician Spaniards	30
	The Title, Sacred Isle; Authority of Plutarch; Diodorus Siculus	30
	Geography of Strabo; Ireland likened to Samothrace	31
	Traditions of Ireland; Intercourse with Gallicia	31
	Opinions of Antiquaries	32

CHAPTER II.

	The earliest Superstitions traceable in the Monuments of Ireland	32
	Three Stages of Superstition	33
	Magi, or Druids	33
	Sun Worship	33
	Moon Worship	34
	Fire and Water Worship	34
	Sacred Fountains	34
	The Field of Slaughter; Child-sacrifice	35
	Round Towers of Ireland	36
	Opinions about them	36
	Christain Emblems on those of Swords and Donoughmore	37
	Probably Fire-Temples	37
	Connexion of Sun-Worship with Astronomy	38
	The Round Towers called Celestial Indexes	39
	Beyond the reach of Historical Record	39
	Other ancient Monuments of Ireland; the Cromleach	40
	The Lia Fail, or Stone of Destiny	41

B. C.		Page
	Rocking Stones	41
	Sacred Hills	42
	The Dynasts inaugurated thereon	42
	Barrows and Cairns	43
	Sacred Groves and Trees	43
	CHAPTER III.	
	Irish Druidism; of a mixed Character	45
	Different from that of Gaul, as Recorded by the Romans	45
	British Druids not mentioned by Cæsar; the Inference	45
	Early Heathen Pre-eminence of Ireland	47
	CHAPTER IV.	
	Learning of the Irish Druids; Ancient Language	47
	Phœnician and Irish Alphabets	48
	Early Use of Letters in Ireland	49
	Proofs thereof	49
	Ogham Character	49
	Introduction of the Roman Character	52
	Mistaken Identity of the Irish Language with the Punic of Plautus	52
	Astronomical Skill of the Irish Druids	53
	CHAPTER V.	
	Opposite Opinions respecting ancient Ireland	55
	Mixture of Truth and Fable	56
	Fabulous Accounts of Partholan	56
	The Fir-bolgs	57
	The Tuatha-de-Danaan	57
	Milesian or Scotic Race	57
	CHAPTER VI.	
	Colonization of Ireland.	58
	Spanish Settlers	59
	Supposed Gaulish Colony	59
	Question whether the Belgæ were Celtic or Teutonic	60
	Colonization of the south-western Parts from Spain	60
	Various Spanish Colonies	61
	The Scythic or Scotic Settlements	62
	Fabulous Accounts by the Bards	62
	Recent Date of the Scotic Colony	63
	Proofs thereof	63

B. C.		Page
	Antiquarian Errors	65
	The Picts	66
	The ancient Britons and Welsh probably not the same Race	67
	Radical Differences between the Gaelic and Cumraig	67
	The Picts were the Progenitors of the Welsh	67
	Of Cimbric Origin	67
	Romances of the Round Table	68
	CHAPTER VII.	
200.	Reign of Kimbaoth	69
	Of Heber and Heremon, Sons of Milesius	70
	First Coming of the Picts	70
	Gold Mines	71
	Classes distinguished by Colours	71
	The royal Legislator, Ollamh Fodhla	71
	His institutions; Convention of Tara	72
	Chronicle of Events; Psalter of Tara	72
	Palace of Emania	72
	Reign of Hugony the Great	73
A. D. 2.	Reign of Conary the Great; Ossianic Poems	73
40.	Privileges of the Bards; abused by them	74
	The Bardic Order reformed, Conquovar.	74
75–82.	Expedition of Agricola to Britain	74
	An Irish Traitor in the Roman Camp	75
	The Irish aid the Picts against the Romans	76
	Belgic Revolt and Massacre	76
90.	Carbre Cat-can raised to the Throne	76
	Disinterestedness of his Son Moran; Moran's Collar	76
126.	Second Revolt (of the Atticots)	76
130.	Tuathal the Acceptable	77
	Assembled States at Tara	77
	Boarian Tribute	77
164.	Jurisprudence; the Eric	78
	Feidlim the Legislator; Con of the Hundred Battles	78
258.	Irish Settlement in Argyleshire; Carbury Riada	79
	The Irish exclusively called Scoti; North Britain called Albany	79
	Cormac Ulfadha	79
	His Accomplishments and Achievements	80
	State of Religion	80

A. D.		Page
	Recluse Druidesses	81
	Fin-Mac-Cumhal, by Moderns called Fingal	81
	Oisin and Osgar	81
	The Fianna Eirinn, or Militia of Ireland	81
	Slaughter of them	82
	Groundless Pretensions of Scotch Writers; Forgeries of Boece	82
	Fabric of Buchanan, Mackenzie, &c.	83
	Destroyed by Stillingfleet	83
	Forgeries of Macpherson	83
	Examination thereof	85
	Historic Value of the Imposture	86
	None but Irish Books among the Highlanders	86
	Long connexion of the Irish and Highlanders	87
	Expedition of Theodosius	87
327.	Battle of Dubcomar; the Druid of the Bloody Hand	87
	A six Days' Battle	88
396.	Irish Invasion of Britain	88
	Nial of the Nine Hostages	88
	Passes from Britain to Armoric Gaul	89
	Providential Captivity of an Armorican Youth	89
406.	Dathy, the last Pagan King of Ireland	89

CHAPTER VIII.

	Credibility of Irish Annals; Tigernach; the Four Masters	89
	Nennius and Geoffry of Monmouth	90
	Collation of Annals	90
	Reception of Christianity in Ireland	92
	Its easy Adoption	93
	Record of Events continued	93
	Its Authenticity	94

CHAPTER IX.

	Early State of the Heathen Irish	96
	Features visible to this day	96
	Partition of Sovereignty	96
	Succession; Tanistry	97
	Exchange of Subsidy and Tribute	97
	Cause of Discords	98
	And of the Want of a National Spirit	98
	Division of Lands and Goods upon each elective Succession	99
	Gavelkind; Females Excluded	99
	Natural Children admitted with legitimate	100
	Custom of Slavery	100
	Social Contracts	101
	Urged respectively in support of adverse Opinions	101
	Examination of Authorities	102
	Ancient Contrasts of Manners visible at the Close of the last Century in Ireland	103
	The early Britons of ill Repute like the Irish	104
	Testimony of St. Jerome	104
	Early Irish Navigation; Curraghs	105
	Himilco's Voyage	105
	The great road from Galway to Dublin	105
	The great Road from Dover to Anglesey, called "the Way of the Irish"	105
	The Inference	105
	The Irish Raths or Hill-fortresses	106
	Curious and costly Remains dug up	108
	Coal Works	109
	Swords of Brass like those found at Cannæ	109

CHAPTER X.

	Mission of St. Patrick.	110
	His Success with little Violence	110
	His judicious Conduct	110
	Adopts the Pagan Customs	110
	The Heresiarchs, Pelagius and Celestus	111
	Palladius	112
	Sketch of the Life of St. Patrick	113
	Born near the Site of Boulogne-sur-mer	113
	Probably in 387	113
	Made captive by Nial of the Nine Hostages	113
403.	Carried captive to Ireland	113
	Escaped or released from Bondage	113
410.	His studies at Tours	114
	His Remembrances and Dreams of Ireland	114
422.	Arrives there	114
	Sudden Conversion of Dicho	115
	His old Master, Milcho, an inveterate Heathen, would not see him	115
	His Paschal Fire; Prophecy of the Magi	115

A. D.		Page
	He preaches at Tara, before the King and States	116
	Tolerant Genius of Paganism	116
	Revisits the Scene of his Dream	116
	Converts two Princesses	116
	Destroys the Idol of "The field of Slaughter"	116
	His successful Career	117
	Establishes the See of Armagh	119
	Writes his Confession	119
465.	Dies in his Retreat at Sabhul	119
	His Disciples Benignus, Secundians, &c.	119
	The Irish Poet Sedulius, or Shiel	120

CHAPTER XI.

	Retrospect of Christianity in Britain	120
	Britain reluctantly separates from Rome	121
	The Letter styled "The Groans of the Britons"	121
	The three Devastations of Britain	121
	Peaceful Triumps of Religion in Ireland	122
500.	Establishment of the Sons of Erck in North Britain	122
	Power of the Hy-Nial Family	122
	Kenneth Mac-Alpine vanquishes the Picts	123
	The Apostle Columkill	123
	Historic Use of Lives of Saints; Montesquieu; Gibbon	123
	Dependence of the Church of Ireland on Rome	124
	Mistaken Opinion of Archbishop Usher	124
	Prayers for the Dead	124
	Pilgrimages	125
	Marriage of the Clergy	125

CHAPTER XII.

	Parentage of Columkill	125
	Why so named	126
	His Labours	126
563.	His Mission to the Western Isles	127
572.	Death of Conal, King of the British Scots	128
	St. Columkill revisits Ireland	128
	Interferes on behalf of the Bards	129
	Death of the Saint	129
	St. Columbanus, also Irish; often confounded with him	130
	Reign of Diarmid	131
	Last Meeting at Tara	131
529.	Retrospect of the Institution of Nunneries	132
	St. Brigid of Kildare	132
	Career of Columbanus abroad	134
	He rebukes King Thierry	134
	His Courage and Labours	134
610.	Arrives at Milan	135
615.	Founds the Monastery of Bobbio; dies	136
	His Writings	136

CHAPTER XIII.

	Paschal Differences	137
630.	Letter of Pope Honorius	138
633.	Deputation to Rome	138
	Its return and Report	138
	Effects of the controversy beneficial	138
	Cummian, an Irish Saint, opposed to Columbanus	139
	Mutual Tolerance	139
	St. Aidan and King Oswald (Anglo-Saxon;) See of Lindisfarne, called the Holy Isle	139
	Rapid succession of Irish Kings; the Inference	140
	Gallus founds the Abbey of St. Gall (Switzerland)	141
650.	Irish Missionaries in France	141
	Irish Missionaries in Brabant	141
	Irish Missionaries on the Rhine	142
	Solar Eclipse; the Yellow Plague	142
664.	Hospitable Reception of Foreign Students in Ireland	142
	Disputation at the Monastery of St. Hilda	143
	Controversy of the Tonsure	143
684.	Northumbrian Expedition to Ireland	144
	King Egfrid, the Aggressor, slain	144
	Paschal System of Rome established by Adamnan	144
	St. Kilian, Apostle of Franconia	145
	Divorce of Geilana by the Persuasion of the saint	145
	She causes him to be waylaid and murdered	145
	The Scholastic Philosophy originated with Irish Divines	146
	Decay of Irish Learning at the Approach of the Eighth Century	146
	Virgilius, or Feargal	146
	His conjecture of the Sphericity of the Earth	147

A. D.		Page
	Accused of Heresy therein	147
	Is made a Bishop, and canonized	147
	Clement and Albinus, Irish Scholars; become known to Charlemagne; their Curious Device	148
	Reference to Denina, Tiraboschi, and Muratori	148
	Dungal; his Letter to Charlemagne	148
	Greek Ecclesiastics attracted to Ireland	149
	The Saxson Scholar Adhelm	150
	Sedulius the Second and Donatus	150
	John Scotus called, Erigena	151
	Translates into Latin the Greek Writings Supposed of Dionysius the Areopagite; his consequent Mysticism	151
	His notions of God and the Soul	152
	Denies the Eternity of Punishment	152
	Fables of his being known to King Alfred	153
	His Character	153

CHAPTER XIV.

	Review of Learning and the Arts	154
	Value of the Argument of the Want of MSS. Remains	154
	Remains Preserved by the Annalists	155
	Origin and Use of Rhyme	155
	Early Connexion of Poetry and Music	156
	The Irish Harp	156
	Excellence of Early Music	156
	Irish Psalmody	157
	Church Architecture	157
	State of Agriculture	158
	Works in Metal, stone, and Colours	159
	Chariots used in War and Travelling	159
	The Brehon Laws	159

CHAPTER XV.

787.	Invasion of Ireland by the Danes	160
795.	The Island of Raglin laid waste by the Danes	160
	The Lochlanders	160
	Supposed Intercourse of the Irish with the Northern Nations preceding the Birth of Christ	161
	Papas, or Irish Priests	161
	Arrival of the Norwegians in Iceland	161
	Black Strangers and white Strangers	162
	A strong Similitude between the political Institutions of Britian and Ireland at the Time of the Northern Invasion	162
	Reign of King Neil of the Showers	162
	Boarian Tribute	163
722.	Invasion of Leinster by the Monarch Fergall	163
	Battle of Almhain	163
	General State of Ireland at this Period	163
	Weakness of the Monarch	163
	The great O'Niell of the Nine Hostages	164
	The North Hy-Niells and the South Hy-Niells	164
	Increasing Strength of the Throne of Munster and its Cause	164
	Dalgais or Delcassians	164
	Cause of the Weakness of the Monarchy	164
795.	The Reign of the Monarch Aidus	165
	Devastations of the Danes	165
810.	Conflicts with the Northmen	166
	Political Connexion of the Irish Kings with Charlemagne	166
799.	Privilege of the Irish Clergy	166
	Inroads of the Monarch into Leinster	167

CHAPTER XVI.

	Achievements of Ragnar Lodbrog, the Sea King	168
	Traditions of the Northmen respecting Ireland	168
	Arrival of Turgesius with a large Fleet in Ireland	168
	Hatred of the Northmen to Christianity	168
	Persecution of the Saxons, its Cause	169
818.	Reign of Concobar	169
	Depredations of the Danes	170
	The Monastery of Banchor	170
826.	The Invasions of the Danes repelled by the Ultonians	170
	Lethlobar, King of Dalaradia	170
	Carbry, King of Hy-Kinsellagh	170
	Dissensions of the Irish among themselves	170

A. D.		Page
839.	Life and triumphs of Feidlim, King of Munster	171
832–3.	Death of the Monarch Concobar	171
844.	Death of Turgesius and expulsion of the Foreigners	173
846.	Death of Feidlim, King of Munster	173
	A romantic Account of his Death	173

CHAPTER XVII.

849.	Arrival of Reinforcements of the Danes	174
850.	Alliances between these Foreigners and the Natives	174
	Demoralizing Effect thereof	174
	Divisions among the Northmen themselves	175
853.	Arrival of three Norwegian Brothers, Anlaf, Iver, and Sitric	175
	A Tax called Nose-money imposed on the Irish	175
863.	Death of the Monarch Melachlin, and the succession of Aodh Finliath	176
	Exploits of Anlaf the Dane	176
879.	Death of Aodh Finliath	176
	Reign of Flan Siona	176
	Retrospect of the Affairs of the Scots of North Britain	176
901 to 903.	Reign of Cormac Mac Culinan, King of Munster	178
907–8.	Death of Cormac at the great Battle of Moylena	180
	His Character	180
	Death of the Monarch Flan Siona	182

CHAPTER XVIII.

	State of Learning and Literature amongst the Irish in the Ninth Century	182
	Ængus, the learned Hagiologist	183
	Fothadh the Poet	183
884.	Death of Maolmura, the Historian	183
	Flann Mac Lonan chief Poet of all Ireland	183
	King Cormac, Author of the Psalter of Cashel	184
	King Cormac's Chapel on the Rock of Cashel	184
	Date and Progress of Stone Architecture in Ireland	184
	Round Towers	185
	Account of the Culdees	185
	Bishops styled Princes	187
	Usurpation of the See of Armagh by Laymen	187

CHAPTER XIX.

	Accounts of the Danish Transactions in Ireland	187
	Traditions concerning Ragnar Lodbrog	188
902.	Expulsion of the Danes from Dublin by the People of Leinster	188
917.	Reign of the Monarch Niell Glundubh, his Successor Donogh	188
926, 931.	Heroic Character of the Roydamna Murkertach; his Victories over the Danes	189
936.	Exploits of Callachan, King of Cashel	189
939.	Alliances between the Northmen and the Irish	190
937.	Battle of Brunanburh	190
	Norse Account of this great Battle	190
	Irish Mode of Fighting	190
948.	Conversion of the Northmen; the Abbey of St. Mary's, Dublin, founded by them	191
950.	The Church of Slane burned by the Danes	192
	Probus, the Historian of St. Patrick, perished in the Flames	192
	Subdivision of the Royal Power adopted by the Northmen in Ireland; the weakening Effects of such Policy	192
939.	Triumphal Progress of the Roydamna through the Kingdom	193
	Takes Callachan Prisoner	193
943.	Death of the Roydamna	193
944.	Death of the Monarch Donogh	193

CHAPTER XX.

	Early Life of Brian Boru	194
	His first Battle under his Brother Mahon	195
	Their Defeat	195
959.	The Victory of Sulchoid over the Danes of Limerick achieved by Brian Boru	195
	Murder of Mahon	195
	Accession of Brian to the Throne of all Munster; attacks and defeats the Murderer of his Brother	196
956.	Death of the Monarch Congelach	196
	Accession of Domnal	196
	A pretended Charter of the English King Edgar	196

A. D.		Page
980.	Death of Domnal, and Succession of Malachy the Great	197
	Power of the Kingdom of Munster increased considerably under Brian	197
	Malachy the Great gains a great Victory over the Danes	198
	His "Noble Proclamation"	198
	The Battle of Tara	198
	Defeat of the People of Leinster by Brian	198
	Growing Jealousy between Brian and Malachy; the sacred Tree in the Plain of Adoration at Adair cut down by Order of Malachy	199
983.	Invasion of Leinster by Malachy	199
	An army marched against him by Brian	199
	A Convention between the two Kings	199
988.	Renewal of Hostilities	199
997.	They again form a Treaty of Peace	200
1000.	Their joint Victories over the Danes	200
	Renewal of their mutual Hostilities	200
	Brian invades the Territory of Malachy	201

CHAPTER XXI.

1001.	Usurpation of the Throne of Tara by Brian	202
	His triumphant Progress through the Country	202
1008.	His Victory over the Southern Hy-Niells in Athlone	202
1005.	The Battle of the Wood of Tulka	202
	Brian's vigorous Policy	203
	Gifts and Privileges bestowed by him on the Church	203
	State of the Country under his Dominion	203
	An unusually long interval of Peace	203
1013.	Disturbed by the Restlessness and Perfidy of the People of Leinster	204
	Invasion of Meath	204
	Malachy defeated by the People of Leinster	204
	Applies for Assistance to Brian	204
	Is refused	204
	Preparations of the Northmen, in League with the Lagenians, for a Descent upon Ireland	204

A. D.		Page
1014.	(Friday, April 23.) The great Battle of Clontarf, and its Consequences	205
	Assassination of Brian	208
	His Burial	208
	A Review of the Life and Actions of Brian Boru	210
	Patriotism of the Irish	218

CHAPTER XXII.

	State of the Schools of Ireland in the Tenth Century	214
	Armagy still visited by Strangers	214
	Eminent native Scholars during this Period	214
	Probus Chief Lecturer of the School of Slane	215
	Eochaidh O'Floinn, a Bardic Historian	215
975.	Keneth O'Artegan, a Poet	215
	A School established by the Irish in England, called "Glastonbury of St. Patrick"	215
	The Monasteries of the Scots or Irish in France and Germany	216
947.	An Irish Bishop named Israel at a Synod held at Verdun	216
	Finden, an Irish Abbot of Celebrity	216
	The Literary Works of an Irish Ecclesiastic named Duncan	216
	Numbers of Bishops from Ireland on the Continent; Efforts made by Council to destroy them	216

CHAPTER XXIII.

	Restoration of the Monarch Malachy	217
1016.	His Victories over the Northmen	217
1022.	The Battle of the Yellow Ford	217
	Death of Malachy	218
	Social State of Ireland at this Period	219
	Decline of Religion and Morals throughout the Country	219
	Ecclesiastical Abuses	220
	Corbes and Erenachs	220
	Comorban	220
	Succession of the Monarchy suspended	220
	Provisional Government established	221

A. D.		Page
1023.	The Kingdom of Munster ruled jointly by Teige and Donchad, the Sons of Brian	221
	Murder of Teige through the Contrivance of his Brother	221
1058.	Donchad titular Monarch of Ireland	221
1063.	His complete Overthrow	221
	Turlogh, his Nephew, aspires to the Throne	221
1064.	Death of Donchad	222
	Turlough, Monarch of Ireland	223
1072.	Death of Dermot	223
	Events of Turlough's Reign	223
	Godfred, King of the Dublin Danes	223
1070.	Murchad the first Irish King of the Danes	223
1086.	Death of Turlough	224
	Is succeeded by his Son Murkertach	224
	Letter of Lanfranc to Turlough	224
	Character of Turlough	224

CHAPTER XXIV.

	Munster divided between the three Sons of Turlough	225
	Contest between Murkertach and Dermot for that Throne	225
	Dermot assisted by M'Lochlin, Prince of Alichia	225
1088.	M'Lochlin Competitor with Murkertach for the Sovereignty	225
1090.	Division of the Kingdom	226
1099.	Interposition of the Ecclesiastical Authorities	226
	Alienation of Church Property	227
1001.	Grant of the City of Cashel to the Church	227
	Invasion of Ulster	227
	Destruction of the Palace of the Princes of Alichia	227
	Ireland threatened with Invasion by Godred Crovan	228
1102.	Descent of Magnus on her Shores	228
	Marriage of his Son with Murkertach's Daughter	228
	Defeat and Death of Magnus	228
	Arnulf de Montgomery assisted by Murkertach in his Rebellion against Henry I.	228
	Marries a Daughter of Murkertach	229
1103.	Defeat of Murkertach on the Plains of Cobha	229
1119.	Death of Murkertach	229
	Affairs of the Church	229
	Bishops of the Danish Sees in Ireland consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury	230
	Correspondence of the Irish Kings with the two Prelates, Lanfranc and Anselm	230
	Ecclesiastical Irregularities	230
	St. Bernard's gloomy Picture of Ireland	231
1111.	Synod held at Fiodh-Ængusa	231
	Synod of Rath-Breasail, for the Regulation of the Dioceses	231

CHAPTER XXV.

	Learned Irishmen of the Eleventh Century	232
	Tigernach the Chronicler	232
	Great value of his Annels	232
	Dates of Eclipses preserved by him	232
	Proof of the Antiquity of Irish Records	232
1056.	Marianus Scotus	233
	Account of his Works	233
	St. Colman, a Patron Saint of Austria	233
	Helias of the Monastery of Monachan, introduced first the Roman Chant at Cologne	234
1036.	Monastery erected for the Irish at Erford	234
	Another at Fulda	234
	Poems of Mac Liag, the Secretary of Brian Boru	234
	Flann and Gilla-Coeman, Metrical Chronographers	234
	Gilla-Moduda, a Metrical Chronographer	235
	Visit of Sulgenus, Bishop of St. David's, to the Schools of Ireland	235

CHAPTER XXVI.

	English Students at Armagh	236
	Interregnum of Fifteen years	236
	Contentions among the Irish Princes for the Monarchy	236
1132, 1133.	Tordelvach O'Conner the successful Candidate	236
	Account of the Reigns of the O'Brian Princes	236
1151.	Battle of Moinmor	237
1153.	Decline of Tordelvach's good Fortune	237
	Is opposed by O'Lochlin, King of Tirone	237
	Interference of the Clergy in the Quarrels of the Princes	238
	Its salutary Effects	238
1156.	Death of Tordelvach	238
1152.	Synod of Kells	239

A. D.		Page
	Palliums distributed by the Pope's Legate Paparo	239
	Labours and Death of the great Saint Malachy	239
	First Introduction of Tithes into Ireland	240
	Misrepresentation of the Irish Church corrected	240
1161.	Murtogh O'Loghlin acknowledged King of Ireland	241
	His Contention with Eochad the King of Ulidia	241
1166.	Is killed in Battle	242
1157.	Synod at Mellifont	242
1158.	Synod of Meath	242
1166.	Roderic O'Connor, King of Connaught, succeeds to the Monarchy	242
1167.	Great Convention at Athboy	242
1153.	Abduction of the Wife of O'Ruarc by Dermot	243
	Supposed, but erroneously, to have been the immediate Cause of the Invasion of Ireland by the English	243
	Enmity between O'Ruarc and Dermot	243
1168.	The latter, expelled from his Dominions, embarks for England	244
	Designs of Henry II. upon Ireland	245
	Obtains a Grant of that Island from Pope Adrian IV.	245

CHAPTER XXVII.

	Letters Patent granted by Henry II. to Dermot	247
	Return of Dermot to England	247
	He applies to Richard de Clare, Earl of Pembroke, surnamed Strongbow	247
	The latter assents to his Proposal	247
	Maurice Fitz-Gerald and Robert Fitz-Stephens, both Normans, and maternal Brothers to Strongbow, engage in the Service of Dermot	247
1169.	Dermot's return to Leinster	247
	His critical State, by his rash and weak Movement	248
1169.	Arrival of Robert Fitz-Stephen	248
	The first Landing of the Anglo-Normans in Ireland	248
	Attack and Surrender of Wexford	249
	Dermot obtains Possession of Wexford	249
	He fulfils his Engagements to the two Norman Brothers	249
	Invasion of Ossary by Dermot and his Allies	250
	The Convocation of the Princes and Nobles of the Land in general at Tara	250
	Dermot invested at Ferns by Roderic	251
	A compact entered into between Roderic and Dermot	251
	Insincerity of Dermot	252
	Defeat of the Monarch Roderic	252
	Arrival of Raymond le Gros	253
	O'Faolan, Prince of the Desies, and O'Ryan of Idrone, march against Raymond le Gros	253
	Barbarity towards the Irish Prisoners taken at Waterford	253
	Strongbow, his Arrival with his Fleet near Waterford	254
	Is joined by Raymond le Gros	254
	They attack Waterford	254
	And take Possession of it	224
	Reginald, a Dano-Irish Lord, and O'Faolen, Prince of the Desies, on the Point of being put to death by Raymond	254
	They are rescued by the Interposition of King Dermot	254
	The Marriage of Strongbow with Eva, Daughter of King Dermot	254
	Sack and Ruin of Waterford	254
	Defection of Hasculf, Governor of Dublin, from Dermot	254
	St. Laurence O'Toole, Archbishop of Dublin, solicited by the Citizens to intercede with Dermot in their Behalf; his Exertions	254
	Taking of Dublin by Dermot	255
	Escape of Hasculf and a number of the leading Citizens to the Orkney Isles	255
	Cormac M'Carthy, King of Desmond, his successful Attack on the Garrison of Waterford, left by Strongbow for the Defence of that City	255
	Milo de Cogan intrusted with the Government of Dublin through the Recommendation of Strongbow	255
	The excess of Barbarity which marked the Course of the confederate Chiefs through the Parts of Meath under the Government of O'Ruarc	255

A. D.		Page
	Weakness of Roderic	255
	Orders the unoffending Son of Dermot to be beheaded; at the same Time, a Grandson of that Prince; also a Hostage he had received from him, the Son of his Foster-brother, O'Coallag	256
	Remarkable Synod of Armagh	256
	Slavery among the Irish	257

CHAPTER XXVIII.

	Alarm of Henry at Strongbow's Progress	257
	Henry's Edict	257
	Strongbow despatches Raymond le Gros with a Letter to the English King	258
	Death of Dermot M'Murrough, King of Leinster, at Ferns	258
	Succession of Earl of Pembroke to the Throne of Leinster	258
	Attack of Hasculf on the City of Dublin	259
	His Repulse and Death	259
	Exertions of St. Laurence O'Toole to expel the English from Ireland	259
	Strongbow returns to defend Dublin	260
	Negotiations between Strongbow and Roderic	260
	Fitz-Stephen besieged in the Fort of Carrig	260
	Strongbow intrepidly sallies from Dublin to relieve him	261
	Treacherous conduct towards Fitz-Stephen	262
	He surrenders and is thrown into Prison	262
	The Irish, in a Panic, set fire to Wexford	262
	Strongbow retires to Waterford	263
	Strongbow Repairs to England	263
	Makes his Peace with King Kenry	263
1171.	King Henry lands in Ireland	263
	O'Ruarc Makes a fruitless attack on the City of Dublin.	263
	Deputation of the Citizens of Wexford wait on King Henry	264
	Receives the Submission of several of the Irish Princes	265
	King Henry holds his Court in Dublin	265
	O'Ruarc of Breffny joins him	265
1172.	Synod held at Cashel	266
	Decrees of the Synod	266
	Council held by Henry at Lismore	267
	Laws enacted by him	268
	Grants of Lands to Hugh de Lacy and others	269
	Henry removes to Waterford	269
	Henry returns to England	270

CHAPTER XXIX.

	Conference of Hugh De Lacy with O'Ruarc	271
	Death of O'Ruarc	272
	Strongbow retires to Ferns	272
	Marriage and Death of De Quincy	272
	Strongbow obeys the Mandate of King Henry to Join him in France	272
	Rivalry between Hervey and Raymond	272
	Strongbow returns to Ireland	272
1173.	Raymond placed at the Head of the Army	272
	Retires in discontent to Wales	274
1174.	Command of the Forces committed to Hervey of Mount Maurice	274
	Raymond is recalled	274
	Raymond is married, at Wexford, to Basilia, the Earl's Sister	274
	Meath over run and despoiled by Roderic	275
	His Retreat	275
	Raymond makes himself Master of Limerick	275
1175.	Bull of Pope Adrian Promulgated	275
	O'Brian of Thomond Besieges Limerick	276
	Roderic's Success	276
	Treaty between Henry and Roderic	277

CHAPTER XXX.

	False Notions concerning the Conquest of Ireland	278
	First appointment of an Irish Bishop by Henry	280
1178.	Death of Strongbow	280
	Basilia summons Raymond to Dublin	280
	Entrusts the Custody of Limerick to O'Brian	280
	Remains of Strongbow interred in Christ's Church in Dublin	280
	Character of Strongbow	280

A. D.		Page
	Fitz-Aldelm appointed chief Governor	282
	Jealousy entertained of the Geraldines	282
	Death of Maurice Fitz-Gerald	282
	Illiberal Conduct of Fitz-Aldelm to his Sons	282
	Successes of the Irish in Meath	282
	Character of Fitz-Aldelm's Government	282
	Expedition of De Courcy into Ulster	282
	Prophecies of Merlin and St. Columba	283
	Council convoked by the Pope's Legate	283
	Dissentions in the family of Roderic	283
	Unsuccessful Expedition of the English into Connaught	284
1177.	Henry Constitutes his Son John Lord of Ireland	285
1178.	Grants of Lands to Fitz-Stephen and others	285
	Fitz-Aldelm recalled from the Government	286
	Hugh De-Lacy appointed his Successor	286

CHAPTER XXXI.

	Unsuccessful incursions of John de Courcy into Ulster	287
	Removal of Hugh de Lacy from the Government	287
	His Reinstatement in the Government	287
1180.	Death of St. Laurence O'Toole	288
	His Parentage and early Life	288
	His Character	288
1226.	Canonization of Lawrence O'Toole	289
	John Cumming elected Archbishop of Dublin	289
	A Bull issued by Pope Lucius III., exempting the Diocess of Dublin from a great Part of the Jurisdiction exercised over it by the See of Armagh	289
	Murder of Milo de Cogan and young Fitz-Stephen, with four other Knights	289
1182.	Dermod Macarthy, King of Desmond, Besieges the Town of Cork	289
	Richard de Cogan, Brother to Milo, takes his place as the Associate of Fitz-Stephen in the Government	290
	The landing of Philip Barry with a considerable Force	290
	Giraldus Cambrensis	290
	The Abbey of Dunbrody founded and endowed by Hervey of Mount-Maurice	290
	Two Monasteries erected in Meath for Augustine Canons by Hugh de Lacy	290
	The Benedictine Priory of the Island of Neddrum, also the Priory of St. John the Baptist, founded by John de Courcy	290
	The origin of the disgraceful Feuds which distracted the domestic Relations of Roderic O'Connor explained	290
	Increasing Popularity of Hugh de Lacy	291
	Philip of Worcester Deputy Governor of Ireland	291
1184.	John Earl of Moreton and Lord of Ireland knighted by his Father at Windsor; embarks at Milford Haven with a large Force	291
	Arrival of, in Waterford	291
	His Expedition into Ulster	291
	His grinding Exactions from the Clergy	291
	Prince John's contemptuous Reception of the Irish Chiefs who came to welcome him on his Arrival in Ireland	292
	Determination on the Part of the Chieftians to seek Revenge for those Insults	292
	Policy pursued by Prince John's Courtiers calculated to aggravate rather than remove these revengeful Feelings	292
	The Erection of three Forts or Castles at Tipperary	293
	The Castle of Ardfinnan attacked by Donald O'Brian, Prince of Limeric	293
	The brave Robert Barry, who accompanied Fitz-Stephen into Ireland, taken and slain in an Assault on Lismore	293
	An Attack upon Cork by Mac Carthy resisted by Theobald Walter	293
	Success of the English Arms in Meath	293
	Recall of Prince John and his Advisers to England	293
	The Government, both Civil and Military, placed in the Hands of De Courcy	293

A. D.		Page
	Assassination of de Lacy	293
	CHAPTER XXXII.	
	On the Subject of Henry's Grant of Ireland to John, and the supposed Effects of that Measure considered	294
1186.	The Translation of the Remains of the three great National Saints, Patrick, Columba, and Brigid	294
1188.	Deposition of O'Loghlin, Prince of Tyrone	295
	Death of Rhoderic O'Lacherlair, his successor	295
	Restoration of O'Loghin	295
	His Death	295
	The Invasion of Connaught by Cornelius O'Dermot and De Courcy	295
	Retreat of De Courcy from Connaught, and Re-establishment of O'Connor	295
	Murder of Rhoderic O'Connor	295
1189.	Death of Henry II.	295
	The kindly Feelings of Richard I. towards his Brother John	296
	On the Question of Henry's Grant of Ireland to his Son John	296
	The Curia Regis, or Common Council, held by Henry at Lismore, styled prematurely a Parliament	297
	At what Time Parliaments, properly so called, began to be held by the English in Ireland	297
	The Subject considered	298
	Views of Molyneux on the Subject	298
	Hugh de Lacy, Son of the first Lord of Meath, appointed Deputy Governor of Ireland by King John	299
	Dissatisfaction and retirement to Ulster of John de Courcy in consequence	299
	Cathal O'Connor, of the Bloody Hand	299
	The Abbey of the Hill of Victory founded by him	299
1194.	Death of Donald O'Brian, King of Thomond and Ormond	300
	Numerous religious Establishments founded by him	300
	Carbrach, Son of Donald, raised to the Sovereignty	300
	William Marshall, second earl of Pembroke, appointed Governor of Ireland	300
	His Administration	300
	Its Results	300
	The Successes of Cathal of Connaught, and Mac Carthy of Desmond	300
	Hamo de Valois appointed Governor of Ireland in place of Earl Marshall, who resigned	301
	His forcible Invasion of the Property of the Church, notwithstanding the angry Remonstrances of Cuming, Archbishop of Dublin	301
	Recall of Hamo, and appointment of Meyler Fitz-Henry to the Government	301
	Death of Roderic O'Connor	301
	His Character	301
	His efforts to revive the almost extinct Learning of the Country	301
	Giolla Moduda, Author of a Metrical Catalogue of the Kings of Ireland	302
1129.	Celsus, or Cellach, Archbishop of Armagh, his Death	302
	Some Remarks respecting the Social Condition of the Irish People at this Period	302
	The Character of Giraldus as a Censor	302
	Some of his Charges against the Irish Clergy; his Account of the State of Manufactures and the useful Arts among the Irish	303
	CHAPTER XXXIII.	
	JOHN.	
	Condition of Ireland	304
1198.	Dissensions among the Natives	304
	Contentions between Cathal and Carrach for the Principality of Connaught	304
1205.	Cathal surrenders to King John two thirds of Connaught	304
	Rivalry between John de Courcy and Hugh de Lacy	305
	De Courcy sent Prisoner to England; his Title to the Earldom of Leinster transferred to Hugh de Lacy	305
1210.	King John undertakes a military Expedition against Ireland	305
	Exaction and Cruelty of the English	305
	Cathal, Prince of Connaught,	

A. D.		Page
	pays Homage to the English Crown	305
	Flight of William de Braviâ and the De Lacys; Capture of the Wife and Daughter of the former by King John	305
	The De Lacys return to Ireland, and are reinstated in their Possessions	306
1209.	Massacre of the inhabitants of Dublin by the Septs	306
	Introduction of English Laws and Usages by King John	306
	He returns to England, leaving John de Grey to the Administration of Affairs in Ireland	307
1215.	Peaceable Disposition of the Inhabitants	307

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Henry III.

1216.	Accession of Henry III., and Appointment of the Earl of Pembroke as protector	308
	Grant of the Great Charter to his English Subjects in Ireland	308
	Difference of the two Charters	309
	Exclusion of the Natives from all Share of English Laws and Liberties	309
1219.	Hostilities between Hugh de Lacy and the young Earl of Pembroke	309
1220.	Surrender of their Principalities by the Irish Chiefs	309
1221.	Henry's Breach of Faith towards Cathal	310
	He bestows the Principality of Connaught on Henry de Burgh	310
1223.	The People of the Province, in Defiance of the Royal Authority, proceed to elect another Chief	310
1233.	Rebellion of Richard Earl of Marshal	310
1234.	Treachery practised towards him	310
	His Death	311
1240.	Feidlim, Chief of Connaught, visits England	311
	Subject of his Conference with Henry	311
	Henry's Disputes and Warfare with the Welsh	312
	Is joined by the Irish Forces under Maurice Fitz Gerald and the prince of Connaught	312
	Death of Fitz Gerald	312
	Henry's Disputes with Ireland	312
1246.	Admission of a few Natives only to the Participation of English Law	312
	Threatened Invasion of Henry's Dominions in Gascony	313
1254.	Henry makes a Grant of the Kingdom of Ireland to his Son Prince Henry	313
	Reservations in that Grant	313
1255.	Renewed Hostilities with Wales	314
	Prince Edward defeats the Irish Force sent to the Assistance of the Welsh	314
1259.	Death of O'Neill, and 350 of his Followers, in an Encounter with Sir Stephen Longespé, Lord Justice of Ireland	314
	Rising of the Mac Carthys of Desmond	314
	Massacre of a Number of Geraldines	314
	Contention between the De Burghs and Geraldines	314
	The King recalls the Lord Justice, appointing David Barry in his stead	315
	Peace restored between the two rival Houses	315
1267.	David Barry replaced by Sir Robert de Ufford	315
1270.	Administration of Sir James Audley	315
	The Natives rise up in arms	315
	The Prince of Connaught takes the Field against Walter de Burgh, Earl of Ulster	315
	Close of Henry's Reign	315

CHAPTER XXXV.

Edward I.

1272.	The Irish petition Edward regarding the Extension to them of the Laws of England	316
	Revolt of the Natives	316
	Incursion of the Scots into Ireland	316
1267.	Robert de Ufford succeeds Genevil as Lord Justice	316

A. D.		Page
	Battle of Glandelory and Defeat of the English	317
1277.	Treachery and Cruelty of Thomas de Clare	317
	His Wars in Thomond	317
1280.	Edward calls upon the English Lords to consider the Petition of the Irish regarding the Extension of the English Law	318
	The King favourable to this Extension	318
	Continued Feuds between the Geraldines and De Burghs	318
1286.	Ascendancy of the latter	319
1288.	Richard Earl of Ulster, the Head of the De Burgh family invades Meath	319
	John Sandford, Archbishop of Dublin, Chief Governor	319
1289.	The Statute entitled "An Ordinance for the State of Ireland"	319
1290.	Contest between De Vesey and the Baron of offaley	319
	De Vesey retires to France, and the King bestows on Offaley the Lordships of Kildare and Rathangan	319
1294.	Triumph and Insolence of the latter in consequence	319
	Truce between the Geraldines and de Burghs	320
1295.	A parliament assembled	320
	New Division of the Kingdom into Counties	320
	Other Acts passed by this parliament	320
1299.	John Wogan joins the King in Scotland with a select force	320
1298.	Tranquillity in Ireland under the Government of Wogan	321
1303.	Renewed Revolt of the Scots.	321
	The Irish Forces again summoned to attend the King	321
	Savage Murders committed by the English and Irish	321
	Regulation of the Coinage of Ireland	322
1307.	The King recalls Gaveston	322
	Espouses Isabella, Daughter of Philip the Fair, and appoints Gaveston Regent	322
	Discontent of the Barons and Expulsion of Gaveston	322
1308.	The King appoints him Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland	323
	Rivalry between Gaveston and the Earl of Ulster	323
1309.	Gaveston recalled to England and succeeded by Sir John Wogan	323
	Parliament at Kilkenny	323
1311.	Conflicts between Richard Earl of Ulster and the De Clares	323
	English Feuds	323
1312.	Defeat of the Lord Justice	324
1309.	Truce between Edward and the Scots violated through the Impatience of both Parties	324
	War between England and Scotland	324
	Edward summons the Irish Chieftains to his aid; they refuse to obey the Call	324
	Continued Exclusion of the Irish from Justice	324
	Interest felt by the Irish in the Fortunes of Robert Bruce	324
1314.	Bruce takes refuge in Ireland; his Expedition from thence attended by his Irish Friends	324
	Victory of Bannockburn; its Effects on the Minds of the Irish	325
	Deputies sent by them to invite Bruce to Ireland	325
	Edward sends over John de Hothum to treat with the Irish Lords	325
	Edward Bruce appears off the Coast of Antrim	325
1315.	Is joined by the Irish	325
	De Burgh summons his Vassals, and marches in pursuit of the Invaders; joined by Feidlin Prince of Connaught	326
	Bruce crowned King of Ireland	326
	Defeat of De Burgh	326
	Feidlim O'Connor joins the Scots	326
	Battle between the O'Connor's	326
	Continued Success of Bruce	327
1316.	Policy of the English Government towards Ireland	327
	Feidlim O'Connor takes the Field	328
	Battle of Athenry; Defeat of the Irish; and Death of Feidlim	328
	Robert Bruce joins his brother in Ireland	328
	Supposed Treachery of the De Lacys	328
	Success of the English Arms	328

CHAPTER XXXVI.

EDWARD II.

A. D. Page

Bruce, with a large Force, advances towards Dublin . 329
Arrest of the Earl of Ulster 329
Intrepidity of the Citizens of Dublin 329
Bruce retires into Kilkenny; Sufferings of his Army . 329
Inactivity of the English . 330
1317. Parliaments held at Kilkenny and Dublin . . . 330
Retreat of Bruce into Ulster 330
Returns to his own Dominions 330
Arrival of the new Lord Justice, Sir Roger Mortimer, afterwards Earl of March 330
Liberation of the Earl of Ulster 330
Petition of the Irish respecting the holding of Parliaments 331
Disaffection among the Clergy - 331
Sentence of outlawry passed against the de Lacys . 321
Famine in Ireland . . 331
1318. Edward Bruce again takes the Field 332
Death of Bruce and Defeat of his Army . . . 332
Disaffection of the clergy; the Pope addresses a Letter to them 333
O'Neill, Prince of Tyrone, his memorable Remonstrance to the Pope . . 323
State of the country from Civil Wars . . . 333
State of the Irish Church . 333
Iniquity of the Laws governing Ireland 334
Extinction of the Order of Knights Templars . . 335

CHAPTER XXXVII.

EDWARD III.

1327. State of Ireland on the Accession of Edward III. . 336
Civil Dissensions among the English Families . . 337
Irruption and Defeat of Mac Murough . . . 337
1328. Roger Outlaw, Prior of Kilmainham, appointed Lord Justice 337
The Natives again petition for English Law . . . 338
1329. Insurrections in the South of Ireland 338
Massacre of English by English at Orgiel . . 338

A. D. Page

Defeat of the English Troops 338
1330. The Lord Justice summons to his aid the Earl of Desmond 338
Desmond takes the Field against the Insurgents . 338
Continued Insurrection . 339
Parliament at Kilkenny . 339
1331. The King appointed the Earl of Ulster Lord-Lieutenant 339
Sir Anthony Lacy sent over as Lord Justice . 339
Severe Measures of the New Lord Justice . . . 339
Arrest of Lord Henry Mandeville and the Earl of Desmond 340
1332. Arrest and Execution of Lord William Bermingham . 340
1331, The King an nounces his
1332. Intention of visiting Ireland, his real Purpose, however, being an Expedition to Scotland 340
1333. Murder of William De Burgh, the third Earl of Ulster . 341
1336. Release of the Earl of Desmond 341
Victory gained by the English over the natives in Connaught 342
1339. The Earl of Desmond attacks and defeats the Insurgents of Kerry 342
The Earl of Kildare attacks the Insurgents of Leinster 342
Roger Outlaw holds the Office of Chief Governor for the fourth Time, and dies the following Year . . 342
1341. Arrival of the new Lord Justice, Sir John Darcy . 342
Arbitrary Measures of the English Government . 342
1342. A Parliament summoned to meet at Dublin . . 343
The Earl of Desmond and his party refuse to attend it . 343
Convention at Kilkenny, and Petition to the King . 343
1343. Sir Ralph appointed Lord Justice; rigorous Measures adopted by him towards Desmond 344
Arrest of the Earl of Kildare 345
1346. Death of Ufford . . . 345
1344. Renewal of Hostilities with France 345
Tranquil State of Ireland . 345
Desmond appointed to the Government of Ireland . . 346
1355. His Death 346

A. D.		Page
	Is succeeded by Sir Thomas Rokeby	346
	Law Reforms	346
	Administration of the Earl of Ormond	346
1361.	The King sends his Son, Lionel Duke of Clarence, as Deputy to Ireland	346
	Measures for the defence of Ireland	346
	The Duke marches against the Insurgents of Munster	347
1364.	He returns to England	347
1367.	Is twice again appointed to the Office	347
	Parliament at Kilkenny	347
	The Statute of Kilkenny	347
	The Duke of Clarence returns to England	347
	Is succeeded by the Earl of Desmond	348
1369.	Sir William de Windsor appointed to the Government	348
	Disturbances in Leinster and Limerick	348
	Arbitrary Conduct of the new Governor	348
	Order issued to Absentees	349
1376.	James, second Earl of Ormond appointed Lord Justice	349
	Struggles between the Civil and Ecclesiastical Judicatures	349
	Foundation of Dublin University	350

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Richard II.

1377.	A Council of Regency chosen during the young King's Minority	352
1379.	Ordinance against Absenteeism	352
1380.	Edmund Mortimer Earl of March, Son of the Duke of Clarence, sent to Ireland as Lord-Lieutenant	353
1381.	His Death; is succeeded by John Colton, and afterwards by Roger Earl of March, Son of the former Lord-Lieutenant	353
1383.	The Desire of the Regency to reform the Affairs of Ireland frustrated by the new Lord Justice, Philip de Courtenay	354
1385.	The King's Favourite, Robert de Vere, created, successively, Marquess of Ireland and Duke of Dublin	354
	Is invested by the King with the Sovereignty of Ireland	354
	His Death at Louvain	354
1389.	The great Northern Chieftain, O'Neill, sends in his Submission to the Government	354
1393.	The King resolves to conduct an Expedition into Ireland	354
1394.	Lands with his Army at Waterford	355
	Panic of the Natives	355
	Submission of O'Neill and other Chiefs	355
	The King entertains them in Dublin	356
1394.	Richard's projected Reforms	357
1395.	Urgent Reasons for his Return to England	357
	He leaves the Earl of March as his Lieutenant	357
	Revolt of the Native Chieftains	358
	Death of the Earl of March in a Conflict with the Natives	358
1398.	The Duke of Surrey sent over as Lord-Lieutenant	358
	The King resolves on another Expedition to Ireland, and appoints the Duke of York Regent in his Absence	358
	He marches against Mac Morough	359
	Difficulties of the Royal Army	359
	Returns towards Dublin	360
	Meeting between the Earl of Gloucester and Mac Morough who refuses to submit	360
	The King receives Intelligence of the landing of Henry of Bolingbroke Duke of Lancaster	361
	He embarks for Milford Haven	361

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Henry IV.

	Struggle between the Houses of York and Lancaster	362
	Invasion of Scotland by Henry	362
1400.	Ireland attacked by the Scots	362
1401.	The King appoints his Son Lord-Lieutenant	362
1402.	The Mayor of Dublin marches against and defeats the Insurgents of Wicklow	363
	Murder of the Sheriff of Louth	363
	The Right of the Sword conferred on the Corporation of Dublin	363

A. D.		Page
	The Lord-Lieutenant returns to England, leaving as Deputy Sir Stephen Scroope, who afterwards resigns the Office to the Earl of Ormond	363
1404.	Infraction of the Truce between England and Scotland	363
1406.	Parliament held at Trim	363
1407.	A Force despatched against Mac Morough	364
	His gallant Resistance and Defeat	364
1408.	The Duke of Lancaster again appointed Lord-Lieutenant	364
	Causes the Arrest of the Earl of Kildare	364
	Is wounded in an Affray	364
	Summons a Parliament at Kilkenny	364
1409.	Returns to England, leaving his Brother, the Prior of Kilmainham, his Successor	364
	Death of Henry	364
	State of Ireland	365
	Restrictions on the native Irish	366

CHAPTER XL.

Henry V.

1413.	Thomas Cranley, Archbishop of Dublin, Lord Deputy	367
	Continued Hostilities between the English and the Natives	367
1414.	Sir Thomas Talbot elected Lord-Lieutenant	367
	Makes a martial Circuit round the Borders of the Pale	367
	Reduces to Submission a great Number of the Irish Chiefs	367
	Measures for the Defence of Ireland	368
1417.	Petition addressed to the English Parliament	368
	The King summons a Body of native Irish to join his Standard in Normandy	368
	Their gallant Conduct under the Prior of Kilmainham	368
	Laws against Absentees	368
	Mac Morough taken Prisoner and committed to the Tower	368
1419.	The Lord-Lieutenant summoned to England	369
	James Earl of Ormond receives the Appointment	369
1421.	Impeachment of the Archbishop of Cashel	369
	Petition of Grievances to the King	369
	Conflicts between the English and Natives	370

CHAPTER XLI.

Henry VI.

1422.	Alliances by Marriage and otherwise between the two Races	371
	The Customs of Gossifred and Fostering	372
	The Earl of March appointed Lord-Lieutenant	372
1423.	His Death	372
	Lord Talbot Appointed his Successor	373
	Frequent Appointment of Governors during the next ten Years	373
1438.	Severe Measures against Absentees	373
	Desmond's romantic Marriage	373
	Is forcibly expelled from his States	373
1439.	Large Grants to his Successor	373
	Decline of the King's Government in Ireland	374
1441.	"Articles" of Accusation against the Earl of Ormond	374
1442.	He is appointed Lord-Lieutenant	374
	Extensive Grants bestowed on Desmond	374
	Renewal of the Charges against Ormond	375
1446.	Retires from the Lord-Lieutenancy, and is succeeded by John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury	376
1449.	Richard Duke of York appointed Viceroy	376
	Committal of Ormond to the Tower	376
	Intended Duel between Ormond and the Prior of Kilmainham	376
	Reduction of the English Power	377
	Wise Policy of the Duke of York	377
1450.	Cade's Rebellion	377
	The Duke of York proceeds to England	377
1455.	The Battle of St. Albans	378
	The Defeat of the Yorkists at Blore Heath	378
	The Duke of York takes Refuge in Ireland	378
1460.	His Conference with Warwick at Dublin	378

A. D.		Page
	Makes his public Entry into London	378
	Is defeated and slain at Wakefield	378
	Liberal Conduct of this Prince	379

CHAPTER XLII.

EDWARD IV.

	Reduced State of the English Power	379
	Predatory Inroads of the Natives	380
	The Duke of Clarence appointed Lieutenant for Life	380
1463.	The Earl of Desmond his Deputy	380
	Lavish Grants to Desmond	380
	The College of Youghall founded and endowed by Desmond	381
	Establishment of a University at Drogheda	381
	Desmond is succeeded as Deputy by Lord Worcester	381
	Worcester's Hostility towards Desmond	381
1467.	Charge of Treason against Desmond	381
	His Execution	382
1468.	The Earl of Kildare appointed Deputy	382
1472.	Institution of the Brotherhood of St. George	382
1476.	The Earl of Ormond restored to Favour	382
	Gerald, eighth Earl of Kildare, appointed Lord Deputy	382
	Marriage of his Sister with Con O'Neill	383
1478–1483.	Death of the Duke of Clarence, and Appointment of Richard Duke of York to the Office of Lord-Lieutenant	383
	Low State of the Irish Revenue	383

CHAPTER XLIII.

EDWARD V. AND RICHARD III.

1483.	The Geraldines in Power	383
	Parliament in Dublin	383
	Enactment passed at this Parliament	383
	Battle of Bosworth and Death of Richard III.	383

CHAPTER XLIV.

HENRY VII.

A. D.		Page
	Policy of Henry	384
	Strength of the Yorkists in Ireland	384
1485.	The Family of Ormond restored to Favour	385
1486.	The Earl of Kildare suspected by the King	385
	Henry's Cruelty towards the young Earl of Warwick	385
	The Simnel Plot	386
	Movements in his favour	386
	Arrival in Dublin of Martin Swartz with a Body of German Troops, accompanied by the Earls of Lincoln and Lovell	386
	Simnel crowned at Dublin by the Bishop of Meath	387
	The Anglo-Irish Leaders resolve to invade England	387
	Defeat of the Invaders at Stoke, by Henry	387
	Simnel made Prisoner and transferred to the Royal Kitchen	387
	The King rewards the Loyalty of Waterford	388
	He pardons Kildare	388
	Henry's mistaken Policy towards Ireland	388
1488.	Sir Richard Edgecomb ordered to repair to Ireland to receive the Allegiance of the People	389
	Kildare absolved	390
1489.	Henry summons the Lords of the Pale to meet him at Greenwich	390
	Murder of the ninth Earl of Desmond	391
	Wars of his Successor with the Irish	391
	Hostilities between O Neill and O'Donnell	391
1490.	Appearance of another Impostor, Perkin Warbeck	391
1492.	Dismissal of the Earl of Kildare from the Office of Deputy, and his father-in-law from that of High Treasurer	392
	Walter Fitz Symons made Deputy	392
	The Duchess of Burgundy sends for Warbeck to Ireland	392
	Warbeck invited to the French Court	392

A. D.		Page
	Withdraws himself privately to Flanders	392
	The Earl of Kildare in Disgrace	393
1494.	Sir Edward Poynings sent to Ireland as Deputy	393
	His Expedition into Ulster	393
	Kildare suspected of Disloyalty	393
	Parliament at Drogheda	394
	Poynings' Act	394
	Other Acts passed in this parliament	394
	"Great Treaty of Commerce" between England and the Netherlands	395
1495.	Warbeck visits the Scottish Court	395
	Marries the Daughter of the Earl of Huntley	395
	O'Donnell's Visit to Scotland	395
1496.	Arrest of Kildare	396
	His Committal to England and Examination	396
	Is acquitted and made Lieutenant	396
1497.	Warbeck again visits Ireland	396
	Is joined by the Earl of Desmond	396
	Their unsuccessful Expedition against Waterford	396
	Warwick escapes to Cornwall	397
	His Execution at Tyburn	397
	Warfare among the Irish Chiefs	397
	Kildare's Successes	397
	Confederacy among the Chiefs	397
1504.	Battle of Knoc-tuadh and Defeat of the Rebels	397
	Kildare receives the Honour of Knighthood	398

CHAPTER XLV.

Henry VIII.

1509.	Kildare continued Chief Governor	398
	Success of his Arms	398
1513.	His Death	399
	Is succeeded by his Son Gerald	399
1514.	Military Exploits of the new Governor	399
1516.	Is summoned to England for Maladministration	400
1519.	Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, appointed Lord-Lieutenant	400
	Secret Designs against Kildare	400
	Violent proceedings of Desmond	400
	Dissensions between Desmond and Ormond	401
	Surrey effects a Reconciliation between them	401
	His ill Success in governing Ireland	401
1521.	Returns to England	401
	League between the Scots and Natives	401
	Ormond receives the Appointment of Lord Deputy	402
1524.	Is supplanted by Kildare	402
	Desmond enters into a Treaty with the King of France	402
1526.	Impeachment of Kildare	402
	Is committed to the Tower and afterwards released	403
	Richard Nugent, Baron of Delvin, the new Lord Deputy	403
1528.	Daring Act of O'Connor, who takes Prisoner the Lord Deputy	403
	Feuds among the English	403
	The Duke of Norfolk's (late Earl of Surrey) Opinions respecting Ireland	404
1530.	The Duke of Richmond appointed Lord-Lieutenant	404
	Triumph of Kildare	404
	Sir William Skeffington Lord Deputy	405
1532.	Removal of Skeffington and Appointment of Kildare in his Place	405
	Allies himself to O'Connor and O'Carrol, Enemies of England	405
1533.	Is seriously wounded	405
	Combination against him	405
1534.	Kildare summoned to England	406
	Report on the State of Ireland	406
	Encroachment of the O'Brians	406
	Condition of the Country	407
	Rebellion of Lord Thomas Fitz Gerald, Vice Deputy	407
	Dublin Castle besieged	408
	Archbishop Allen barbarously murdered	408
	Fitz Gerald invades the Territory of the Earl of Ossory	408
	Endeavours, without Success to induce Ossory to join him	408
	Truce with the Citizens of Dublin	409
	Sentence of Excommunication passed against Fitz Gerald	410
	Death of Kildare in the Tower	410
	Outrages committed by Fitz-Gerald	410
	Applies for Aid to Foreign Powers	410

A. D.		Page
1535.	Sir William Skeffington lays siege to Maynooth	411
	Surrender of the Castle	411
	Fitz Gerald takes refuge with O'Brien	412
	Inactivity of the English Government	412
	Sir John Saintelow appointed Marshal of the Army	412
	Feuds among the Chiefs	412
	Destructive Effects of the War	413
	Arrival of Lord Leonard Gray to conduct the War	413
	Sir William Skeffington marches against Offaley	414
	O'Connor surrenders	414
	Submission of O'Connor who is sent prisoner to England	414
	His Execution together with his five Uncles	414
	The Destruction of O'Brian's Bridge	414
1536.	Rumoured Return of Lord Thomas Fitz Gerald	415
1537.	Expedition of the Lord Deputy into Offaley, and Expulsion of Brian O'Connor	415
	That Territory bestowed on the Chief's Brother	415
	The Castle of Dengen besieged	415
	Conduct of the Brothers	415
	Parley between the Lord Deputy and O'Connor	416
	Gerald Fitz Gerald, the Brother of Lord Thomas	416
1538.	The Aid of the Scottish Monarch solicited in his favour	417
	Marriage of Gerald's Aunt, Lady Eleanor, to O'Donnell	417
	Lord Gray's military Progress through the Kingdom	417
	Charges against him	417
	League between Desmond and O'Brian	417
	Unworthy Submission to Desmond	418
	Contest between Desmond and Fitz Maurice for Right of Inheritance	418
	Countenance afforded by Desmond to young Fitz Gerald	418
	Lord Gray suspected of favouring Gerald	418
	Religious Differences	519
	Supposed League of the Scottish Court with the Irish Chief	419
	Expulsion of the Scotch Refugees	419
	The Geraldine League	420
	Expedition into Munster under the Command of the Lord Deputy and the Earl of Ormond	420
	Submission of the Geraldines	420
	Defiance of Desmond	421
	"The Battle of Bellahoe"	421
	Escape of Gerald into France	421
	His subsequent Adventures	421

CHAPTER XLVI.

HENRY VIII. (Continued.)

A. D.		Page
	Progress of the Reformation in England	422
	Henry's Differences with the Pope	423
	Fate of Sir Thomas More	423
	Henry's Cruelty	423
1539.	The act for abolishing Diversity of Opinions	424
	The Reformation in Ireland	424
	Opposed by Archbishop Cromer	424
	Supported by Archbishop Browne	425
	Parliament in Ireland	425
	Opposition of the Proctors to the Act of Supremacy	425
	Traffic in spiritual Patronage	425
	Continued Opposition of the Proctors	425
	Bill for their Expulsion from Parliament	426
	Character of Archbishop Browne	426
	Henry's Letter to him	426
	Differences between Browne and Lord Gray	426
	Attachment of official and other Persons to the ancient Faith	426
	Comparative Tranquillity of Ireland	427
	Two Archbishops and eight Bishops take the Oath of Supremacy	427
	Act for the Suppression of religious Houses	428
	Urgent request of Archbishop Browne for a Share of the religious Plunder	428
	Silence of the Clergy	428
1540.	Lord Gray returns to England	429
	Differences between Ormond and the late Deputy	429
	Fresh Indications of Revolt	429
	Peace concluded with O'Niell	430
	General Muster of the Irish at Fowre	430
	Mutual Concessions	430
	Desmond supposed to submit	430
	Murder committed by his Brother	430

A. D.		Page
	Ormond endeavours to conciliate Desmond	430
	Sir Anthony Sentleger, Lord Deputy	431
	Peaceful Disposition of the native Chiefs	431
	Submission of Mac Morough	431
	O'Connor at first refractory, at length submits	431
1541.	Parliament held	432
	Proclamation for a general Pardon	432
	Chivalrous Conduct of Tirlogh O'Toole	432
	Submission of Desmond	432
	Meeting of the Lord Deputy with O'Brian	433
	Parliament at Dublin attended by the Irish Chiefs	433
	An Act passed conferring on Henry the Title of King of Ireland	433
	Execution of Lord Leonard Gray	433
	Kindness of the King to Desmond and other Chiefs	434
	Arrest of Lord Roche and the White Knight	434
1542.	Submission of O'Neill and O'Donnell	434
	Titles bestowed on O'Neill and other Chiefs	435
	Description of O'Connell's Dress	435
1543.	Particulars of the Anglo-Irish Peerage	435
	Want of Money in Ireland	436
	Wise Policy of Henry's Government	436
1544.	Preparations for the Campaign in France	437
	Irish Troops employed in France	437
	Their Bravery at the Siege of Boulogne	437
1545.	Expedition against Scotland under Lord Lennox	437
	Rumours of the Return of Gerald Fitz Gerald	437
	The Squadron sails under the Command of Lennox and Ormond	437

THE

HISTORY OF IRELAND.

CHAPTER I.

ORIGIN OF THE IRISH PEOPLE.—EARLY NOTICES OF IRELAND.

There appears to be no doubt that the first inhabitants of Ireland were derived from the same Celtic stock which supplied Gaul, Britain, and Spain with their original population. Her language, the numerous monuments she still retains of that most ancient superstition which the first tribes who poured from Asia into Europe are known to have carried with them wherever they went, sufficiently attest the true origin of her people. Whatever obscurity may hang round the history of the tribes that followed this first Eastern swarm, and however opinions may still vary, as to whether they were of the same, or of a different race, it seems, at least, certain, that the Celts were the first inhabitants of the western parts of Europe; and that, of the language of this most ancient people, the purest dialect now existing is the Irish.

It might be concluded, from the near neighbourhood of the two islands to each other, that the fortunes of Britain and Ireland would, in those times, be similar; that, in the various changes and mixtures to which population was then subject, from the successive incursions of new tribes from the East, such vicissitudes would be shared in common by the two islands, and the same flux and reflux of population be felt on both their shores. Such an assumption, however, would, even as to earlier times, be rash; and, how little founded it is, as a general conclusion, appears from the historical fact, that the Romans continued in military possession of Britain for near four hundred years, without a single Roman, during that whole period, having been known to set foot on Irish ground.

The system of Whitaker and others, who, from the proximity of the two islands, assume that the population of Ireland must have been all derived from Britain, is wholly at variance, not merely with probability, but with actual evidence. That, in the general and compulsory movement of the Celtic tribes towards the west, an island, like Ireland, within easy reach both of Spain and Gaul, should have been left unoccupied during the long interval it must have required to stock England with inhabitants, seems, to the highest degree, improbable. But there exists, independently of this consideration, strong evidence of an early intercourse between Spain and Ireland, in the historical traditions of the two countries, in the names of the different Spanish tribes assigned to the latter by Ptolemy, and, still more, in the sort of notoriety which Ireland early, as we shall see, acquired, and which could only have arisen out of her connexion with those Phœnician colonies, through whom alone a secluded island of the Atlantic could have become so well known to the world.

At a later period, when the Belgic Gauls had gained such a footing in Britain, as to begin to encroach on the original Celtic inhabitants, a remove still farther to the west was, as usual, the resource of this people; and Ireland, already occupied by a race speaking a dialect of the same language,—the language common, at that period, to all the

Celts of Europe,—afforded the refuge from Gothic invasion* which they required. It has has been shown clearly, from the names of its mountains and rivers,—those unerring memorials of an aboriginal race,—that the first inhabitants of the country now called Wales must have been a people whose language was the same with that of the Irish, as the mountains and waters of that noble country are called by Irish names.† At what time the Belgæ, the chief progenitors of the English nation, began to dispossess the original Celtic inhabitants, is beyond the historian's power to ascertain; as is also the question, whether those Belgæ or Fir-bolgs, who are known to have passed over into Ireland, went directly from Gaul, or were an offset of those who invaded Britain.

But however some of the ingredients composing their population may have become, in the course of time, common to both countries, it appears most probable that their primitive inhabitants were derived from entirely different sources; and that, while Gaul poured her Celts upon the shores of Britain, the population of Ireland was supplied from the coasts of Celtic Spain.‡ It is, at least, certain, that, between these two latter countries, relations of affinity had been, at a very early period, established; and that those western coasts of Spain, to which the Celtic tribes were driven, and where afterwards Phœnician colonies established themselves, were the very regions from whence this communication with Ireland was maintained.

The objections raised to this supposed origin and intercourse, on the ground of the rude state of navigation in those days, are deserving of but little attention. It was not lightly, or without observation, such a writer as Tacitus asserted, that the first colonizing expeditions were performed by water, not by land;§ and however his opinion, to its whole extent, may be questioned, the result of inquiry into the affinities of nations seems to have established, that at no time, however remote, has the interposition of sea presented much obstacle to the migratory dispositions of mankind. The history, indeed, of the Polynesian races, and of their common origin—showing to what an immense extent, over the great ocean, even the simplest barbarians have found the means of wafting the first rudiments of a people‖—should incline us to regard with less skepticism those coasting and, in general, land-locked voyages, by which most of the early colonization of Europe was effected;—at a period, too, when the Phœnicians, with far more knowledge, it is probable, of the art of navigation, than modern assumption gives them credit for, were to be seen in the Mediterranean, the Baltic, the Atlantic,—every where upon the waters. With respect to the facilities of early intercourse between Ireland and Spain, the distance from Cape Ortegal to Cape Clear, which lie almost opposite to each other, north and south, is not more than 150 leagues,—two thirds of which distance, namely, as far as the island of Ushant, might all have been performed within sight of land.¶ Reserving, however, all farther investigation into this point, till we come to treat of the different colonies of Ireland, I shall here endeavour to collect such information respecting her early fortunes as the few, but pregnant, notices scattered throughout antiquity afford.

With one important exception, it is from early Greek writers alone that our first

* Without entering here into the still undecided question, as to whether the Belgæ were Celts or Goths, I shall merely observe, that the fair conclusion from the following passage of Cæsar is, that this people were of a Gothic or Teutonic descent.

"Cum ab his quæreret, quæ civitates quantæque in armis essent, et quid in bello possent, sic reperiebat; plerosque Belgas esse ortos ab Germanis; Rhenumque antiquitus transductos, propter loci fertilitatem ibi consedisse; Gallosque, qui ea loca incolerent, expulisse."—*De Bell. Gall.* lib. ii. c. 4.

† Lhuyd's Preface to his Irish Dictionary, in the Appendix to Nicholson's Historical Library.—Lhuyd extends his remark to England as well as Wales. "Whoever takes notice," he says, "of a great number of the names of the rivers and mountains throughout the kingdom, will find no reason to doubt but the Irish must have been the inhabitants when those names were imposed on them." In other words, the first inhabitants of Britain and Wales were Celts of Gael.

The author of Mona Antiqua has, without intending it, confirmed the truth of Lhuyd's remark, by stating that the vestiges of old habitations still to be seen on the heaths and hills of Anglesey, are called, to this day, Cyttie'r Gwyddelod, or the Irishmen's Cottages. These words, too, it appears (see Preface to O'Brien's Irish Dictionary,) "should more properly and literally be rendered Irishmen's habitations, or seats; for the Irish word Cathair, of which Ceitir is a corruption, signifies either a city or town, or habitation."

‡ That the Irish did not consider themselves as being of Gaulish origin, appears from their having uniformly used the word Gall to express a foreigner, or one speaking a different language.

§ Nec terra olim, sed classibus advehebantur, qui mutare sedes quærebant.—*Germ.* c. 2.

‖ "A comparison of their languages (those of the Polynesian races) has furnished a proof, that all the most remote insular nations of the Great Ocean derived their origin from the same quarter, and are nearly related to some tribes of people inhabiting a part of the Indian continent, and the Isles of the Indian Archipelago."—*Pritchard's Eastern Origin of the Celtic Nations.*

Dr. Rennel, in noticing some doubts respecting the circumnavigation of Africa by the Egyptians, says sensibly, "Since so many of these (ancient) authorities concur in the behalf that Africa had been sailed round, we cannot readily guess why it should be doubted at present, unless the moderns wish to appropriate to themselves all the functions and powers of nautical discovery."—*On the Geographical System of Herodotus.*

¶ See Smith's History of Cork, book, i. chap. i. According to Appian, the Spaniards for his time used to perform the passage to Britain, with the tide in their favour, in half a day.—"Quando in Britanniam, unâ cum æstu maris transvehuntur quæ quidem trajectio dimidiati diei est."—*Iberica.*

glimpses of the British isles, in their silent course through past ages, are obtained; nor was it till a comparatively late period that the Greeks themselves became acquainted with their existence. The jealousy with which the Phœnicians contrived to conceal from their Mediterranean neighbours these remote sources of their wealth, had prevented, even in the time of Homer, more than a doubtful and glimmering notion of a Sea of Isles beyond the Pillars from reaching the yet unexcursive Greeks. Enough, however, had transpired to awaken the dreams alike of the poet and the adventurer; and while Homer, embellishing the vague tales which he had caught up from Phœnician voyages,* placed in those isles the abodes of the Pious and the Elysian fields of the Blest,† the thoughts of the trader and speculator were not less actively occupied in discovering treasures without end in the same poetic regions. Hence all those popular traditions of the Fortunate Islands, the Hesperides,‡ the Isle of Calypso,—creations called up in these "unpathed waters," and adopted into the poetry of the Greeks, before any clear knowledge of the realities had reached them. In the "Argonautics,"§ a poem written, it is supposed, more than 500 years before the Christian era, there is a sort of vague dream of the Atlantic, in which Ireland alone, under the Celtic name of Iernis, is glanced at, without any reference whatever to Britain. It is thought, moreover, to have been by special information, direct from the Phœnicians‖ that the poet acquired this knowledge; as it appears from Herodotus, that not even the names of the Cassiterides, or British Isles, were known in Greece when he wrote; and the single fact, that they were the islands from which tin was imported, comprised all that the historian himself had it in his power to tell of them.

The very first mention that occurs of the two chief British Isles is in a work¶ written, if not by Aristotle, by an author contemporary with that philosopher,—the treatise in question having been dedicated to Alexander the Great. The length of time, indeed, during which the monopoly of the trade in tin by the Phœnicians was kept not only inviolate, but secret, forms one of the most striking marvels of ancient history. For although, as far back as about 400 years before Herodotus wrote, there had reached Homer, as we have seen, some faint glimpses of an ocean to the west, which his imagination had peopled with creations of its own, it was not till the time of Aristotle**—near a whole century after—that the Massilian Greeks had learned to explore those western regions themselves, and that, for the first time, in any writings that have come down to us, we find the two chief British islands mentioned, in the authentic treatise just referred to, under their old Celtic names of Albion and Ierne.

It is from a source, however, comparatively modern—the geographical poem of Festus Avienus—that our most valuable insight into the fortunes of ancient Ireland is derived. In the separate expeditions undertaken by Hanno and Himilco beyond the Straits, while the former sailed in a southern direction, the latter, shaping his course to the north, along the shores of Spain, (the old track of Phœnician voyagers between Gades and Gallicia,) stretched from thence across the ocean to the Œstrumnides, or Tin Isles. Of this expedition, a record, or journal, such as Hanno has left of his Periplus, was deposited by

* "That Homer had the opportunities mentioned, and that he did not neglect to improve them, will best appear by considering what he has really learned from the Phœnicians. This will be a certain proof of his having conversed with them."—*Blackwell, Inquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer*, sect. 11.

† Ὁ τοινυν ποιητης τας τοσαυτας στρατιας οτι τα ισα κατα της Ἑσπερας ἱστορησας, πυνθανομενος δη και πλουτου και της αλλης αρετας (οἱ γαρ Φοινικες ἐπλουν τουτο) ενταυθα τον των ευσεβων επλασε χωρον και το Ηλυσιον πεδιον.—*Strabon.* lib. iii.

‡ Plutarch. de Facie in Orb. Lun.—Hesiod. Theogon.

§ Written, it is supposed, by Onomacritus, a cotemporary of Pisistratus. There appears to be no good reason for doubting the high antiquity of this poem. The treatise, in defence of its authenticity, by Ruhnkenius, who shows it to have been quoted by two ancient grammarians, seems to have set the question at rest. (Epist. Crit. 2.) Archbishop Usher, in referring to the mention of Ierne in this poem adds, that "the Romans themselves could not produce such a tribute to their antiquity:" (Ecclesiar. Antiq. c. 16:) and Camden, to secure a share of the high honour for his country, first supposes that a nameless island, described by the poet, must be Britain; and then changes the sole epithet by which it is described, for one more suited to his purpose:—"Quæ necessariò sit hæc nostra, Αστυλιον χθονα, id est, albicantem terram dixisse quam ante pauculos versus Νησον πιειρησσαν, pro λευκηεσσαν, vocasse videatur."—*Camden, Britan.*

‖ "Nempe edoctus à Phœnicibus, Græcis enim tunc temporis hæc loca erant inaccessa."—*Bochart, Geog. Sac.* lib. i. c. 39. The epithet, Cronian, applied by this Orphic poet to this sea in the neighbourhood of the Hyperboreans, is, according to Toland, purely Irish; the word Croin, in that language, signifying Frozen.

This circumstance of Ireland having been known to the Argonauts, is thus alluded to by a Dutch writer of the sixteenth century, Adrian Junius:

"Illa ego sum Graiis olim glacialis Ierne
Dicta, et Jasoni puppis bene cognita nautis."

¶ De Mundo.

** The Athenians had already, in this philosopher's time, as he himself mentions (Œconomic. 1, 2.) been advised to secure to themselves the monopoly of the Tyrian market, by buying up all the lead.

Himilco in one of the temples of Carthage, and still existed in the fourth century, when Avienus, having access, as he mentions, to the Punic records, collected from thence those curious details which he has preserved in his Iambics,* and which furnish by far the most interesting glimpse derived from antiquity of the early condition of Ireland. The Œstrumnides, or Scilly Islands, are described, in this sketch, as two days' sail from the larger Sacred Island, inhabited by the Hiberni; and in the neighbourhood of the latter, the island of the Albiones, it is said, extends.† Though the description be somewhat obscure, yet the Celtic names of the two great Islands, and their relative position, as well to the Œstrumnides as to each other, leave no doubt as to Britain and Ireland being the two places designated. The commerce carried on by the people of Gades with the Tin Isles is expressly mentioned by the writer, who adds, that "the husbandmen, or planters, of Carthage, as well as her common people, went to those isles,"—thus implying that she had established there a permanent colony.

In this short but circumstantial sketch, the features of Ireland are brought into view far more prominently than those of Britain. After a description of the hide-covered boats, or currachs, in which the inhabitants of those islands navigated their seas, the populousness of the isle of the Hiberni, and the turfy nature of its soil, are commemorated. But the remarkable fact contained in this record—itself of such antiquity—is, that Ireland was then, and had been from ancient times, designated "The Sacred Island." This reference of the date of her early renown, to times so remote as to be in Himilco's days ancient, carries the imagination, it must be owned, far back into the depths of the past, yet hardly farther than the steps of history will be found to accompany its flight. Respecting the period of the expeditions of Hanno and Himilco, the opinions of the learned have differed; and by some their date is referred to so distant a period as 1000 years before the Christian era.‡ Combining the statement, however, of Pliny, that they took place during the most flourishing epoch of Carthage,§ with the internal evidence furnished by Hanno's own Periplus, there is no doubt that it was, at least, before the reign of Alexander the Great that these two memorable expeditions occurred. Those "ancients," therefore, from whom the fame of the Sacred Island had been handed down, could have been no other than the Phœnicians of Gades, and the Gallician coasts of Spain, who through so many centuries, had reigned alone in those secluded seas, and were the dispensers of religion, as well as of commerce, wherever they bent their course.‖

At how early a period this remarkable people began to spread themselves over the globe, the inscription legible, for many an age, on the two Pillars, near the Fount of the Magi, at Tanglers,—"We fly from the face of Joshua, the robber,"—bore striking testimony.¶ Nothing, indeed, can mark more vividly the remote date of even the maturity

* "Hæc nos ab imis Punicorum annalibus
Prolata longo tempore edidimus tibi."
Fest. Avienus, de Oris Maritim.

It would appear from this, that the records to which Avienus had access, were written in Punic,—a circumstance which, if true, says Dodwell, would afford a probable reason for the name of Himilco having been so long unknown to the Greeks:—"Ea causa satis verisimilis esse potuit cur tamdiù Græcos lateurit Himilco, etiam eos qui collegæ meminerint Hannonis."—*Dissert. de Peripli Hannonis ætate.*

† "Ast hinc duobus in Sacram, sic Insulam
Dixere prisci, solibus cursus rati est.
Hæc inter undas multum cespitem jacit,
Eamque latè gens Hibernorum colit.
Propinqua rursus insula Albionum patet.
Tartessiisque in terminos Œstrumnidum
Negociandi mos erat, Carthaginis
Etiam colonis, et vulgus inter Herculis
Agitans columnas hæc adibant æquora."

One of the reasons assigned by Dodwell for rejecting the Periplus of Hanno, as a work fabricated, after his death, by some Sicilian Greek, is the occurrence of Greek names instead of Phœnician for the different places mentioned in it. This objection, however, does not apply to the account of Himilco, as reported by Avienus, in which the old names Gadir, Albion, and Hibernia declare sufficiently their Phœnician and Celtic original.

Speaking of the Argonautics and the record of Himilco, Bishop Stillingfleet says, "These are undoubted testimonies of the ancient peopling of Ireland, and of far greater authority than those domestic annals now so much extolled."—*Antiquities of the British Churches*, c. 3.

‡ Nous croyons donc, que cette expédition, a du précéder Hésiode de trente ou quarante ans, et qu'on peut la fixer vers mille ans avant l'ère Chrétienne.—*Gosselin, Recherches sur la Geographie des Anciens.*

§ Et Hanno, Carthaginis potentia florente, circumvectus a Gadibus ad finem Arabiæ, navigationem eam prodidit scripto: sicut ad extera Europæ noscenda missus eodem tempore Himilco.—*Plin. Nat. Hist.* lib. ii. c. 67.

‖ See, for a learned and luminous view of the relations of ancient Ireland with the East, Lord Rosse's Vindication of the Will of the Rt. Hon. Henry Flood.

¶ Procop. Vandal. lib. 2. c. 10.—Even this is by Bishop Cumberland considered too stinted a range of time for their colonizations. "They seem to me," he says, "to have had much more time to make their plantations than that learned man (Bochart) thought of; for, as I understand their history, they had time from about Abraham's death, which was about 370 years before Joshua invaded Canaan, from which Bochart begins."—*Notes on the Synchronism of Canaan and Egypt.*

of their empire, than the impressive fact, that the famed temple which they raised, at Gades, to their Hercules, was, in the time of the Romans, one of the most memorable remains of ancient days.* Not to go back, however, as far as the period, little less than 1500 years before our era, when their colonies first began to swarm over the waters, we need but take their most prosperous epoch, which commenced with the reign of Solomon, and supposing their sails to have then first reached the Atlantic, the date of the probable colonization of that region must still be fixed high in time. In the days of Herodotus, by whom first vaguely, and without any certain knowledge of a sea beyond the Straits, the importation of tin from the Cassiterides is mentioned, it is hardly too much to assume that the Phœnicians had, for some time, formed a settlement in these islands. That they must have had a factory here is pretty generally conceded:† but a people, whose system it was to make colonization the basis of their power, were assuredly not likely to have left a position of such immense commercial importance unoccupied; and the policy, first taught by them to trading nations, of extending the circle of their customers by means of colonies, was shown in the barter, which they thenceforward maintained with the British Isles—exchanging their own earthen vessels, salt, and brass, for the tin, lead, and skins produced in these islands.‡

There are grounds for believing, also, that to the Phœnicians, and consequently to the Greeks, Ireland was known, if not earlier, at least more intimately, than Britain.§ We have seen that, in the ancient Poem called the "Argonautics," supposed to have been written in the time of the Pisistratidæ, and by a poet instructed, it is thought, from Phœnician sources, Ierne alone is mentioned, without any allusion whatever to Britain; and in the record preserved by Himilco's voyage to these seas, while the characteristic features of the Sacred Isle are dwelt upon with some minuteness, a single line alone is allotted to the mere geographical statement that in her neighbourhood the Island of the Albiones extends.

Another proof of the earlier intimacy which the Phœnician Spaniards maintained with Ireland, is to be found in the Geography of Ptolemy, who wrote at the beginning of the second century, and derived chiefly, it is known, from Phœnician authorities, his information respecting these islands. For while, in describing the places of Britain, more especially of its northern portion, this geographer has fallen into the grossest errors,—placing the Mull of Galloway to the north, and Cape Orcas or Dunsby Head to the east,‖—in his account of Ireland, on the contrary, situated as she then was beyond the bounds of the Roman Empire, and hardly known within that circle to exist, he has shown considerable accuracy, not only with respect to the shores and promontories of the island, but in most of his details of the interior of the country, its various cities and tribes, lakes, rivers, and boundaries. It is worthy of remark, too, that while of the towns and places of Britain he has in general given but the new Roman names, those of Ireland still bear on his map their old Celtic titles;¶ the city Hybernis still tells a tale of far distant times, and the Sacred Promontory, now known by the name of Carnsore Point, transports our imagination back to the old Phœnician days.** When it is considered that Ptolemy, or rather Marinus of Tyre, the writer, whose steps he implicitly followed, is believed to

* Diodor. Sicul. lib. iv.

† "During this commerce, it can scarce be doubted that there might be established, on the different coasts, factories for the greater convenience of trading with the natives for skins, furs tin, and such other commodities as the respective countries then produced."—*Beauford, Druidism Revived, Collect. Hib.* No. VII.

‡ Μεταλλα δε εχοντες κασσιτερου και πολυβδου, νησους αντι τουτων και την δερματων διαλλαττοντες, και αλας, και χαλκωματα προς τους εμπορους.—*Strab. Geograph.* lib. iii.

§ It may appear inconsistent with the claim of Ireland to priority of reputation, that the whole of the Cassiterides were, in those days, called the Britannic Isles,—a circumstance which, taken as implying that the others had derived their title from Britain, and had so far merged their reputation in hers, would doubtless indicate so far a pre-eminence on her part. The name Britannia, however, which, in Celtic, means a land of metals, was applied generically to the whole cluster of the Tin Isles,—the Isle of Man and those of Scilly included,—and being, therefore, a title common to all, could not imply, in itself, any superiority of one over another. Whether tin has been ever found in Ireland is doubtful; but lead mines, which were, at least, equally a source of lucre to the Phœnicians, have been, not long since, discovered and worked.

‖ "By an error in the geographical or astronomical observations preserved by Ptolemy, the latitudes north of this point (the Novantum Chersonesus, or Rens of Galloway,) appear to have been mistaken for the longitudes, and consequently this part of Britain is thrown to the east."—*Notes on Richard of Cirencester.*

¶ "Ireland plainly preserves, in her topography, a much greater proportion of Celtic names than the map of any other country."—*Chalmer's Caledonia*, vol. i. book i. chap. i.

** "In the remote ages of Phœnician commerce, all the western and south-western promontories of Europe were consecrated by the erection of pillars or temples, and by religious names of Celtic and primeval antiquity: this is expressly stated by Strabo. These sacred headlands multiplied in proportion as new discoveries were made along the coasts."—*Letters of Columbanus, by O'Connor*, Letter Third. The learned writer adds in a note:—"The Sacrum Promontorium, or south-western headland of Iberia Antiqua, was Cape St. Vincent. That of Ireland was Carne-soir point, as stated by Ptolemy." This headland of Carnsore would be the first to meet the eyes of the Phœnician navigators in their way from Cornwall to Ireland.

have founded his geographical descriptions and maps on an ancient Tyrian Atlas,* this want of aboriginal names for the cities and places of Britain, and their predominance in the map of Ireland, prove how much more anciently and intimately the latter island must have been known to the geographers of Tyre than the former.

But even this proof of her earlier intercourse with that people and their colonies, and her proportionate advance in the career of civilization, is hardly more strong than the remarkable testimony, to the same effect, of Tacitus, by whom it is declared that, at the time when he wrote, "the waters and harbours of Ireland were better known, through the resort of commerce and navigators, than those of Britain."† From this it appears that, though scarce heard of, till within a short period, by the Romans, and almost as strange to the Greeks, this sequestered island was yet in possession of channels of intercourse distinct from either; and that while the Britons, shut out from the Continent by their Roman masters, saw themselves deprived of all that profitable intercourse which they had long maintained with the Veneti, and other people of Gaul, Ireland still continued to cultivate her old relations with Spain, and saw her barks venturing on their accustomed course, between the Celtic Cape and the Sacred Promontory, as they had done for centuries before.

Combining these proofs of an early intercourse between Ireland and the Phœnician Spaniards, with the title of Sacred bestowed on this island in far distant times, it can hardly be doubted, that her pre-eminence in religion was the chief source of this distinction; and that she was, in all probability, the chosen depository of the Phœnician worship in these seas. By the epithet Sacred, applied to a people among the ancients, it was always understood that there belonged to them some religious or sacerdotal character. In this sense it was, that the Argippæi, mentioned by Herodotus,‡ were called a Holy People; and the claim of Ireland to such a designation was doubtless of the same venerable kind. It has been conjectured, not without strong grounds of probability, that it was a part of the policy of the Phœnician priesthood to send out missions to their distant colonies, on much the same plan as that of the Jesuits at Paraguay, for the purpose of extending their spiritual power over those regions of which their merchants had possessed themselves;§ and it is by no means unlikely that the title of Sacred, bestowed thus early upon Ireland, may have arisen from her having been chosen as the chief seat of such a mission.

The fact, that there existed an island devoted to religious rites in these regions, has been intimated by almost all the Greek writers who have treated of them; and the position, in every instance, assigned to it, answers perfectly to that of Ireland. By Plutarch‖ it is stated, that an envoy despatched by the Emperor Claudius to explore the British Isles, found on an island, in the neighbourhood of Britain, an order of Magi accounted holy by the people: and, in another work of the same writer,¶ some fabulous wonders are related of an island lying to the west of Britain, the inhabitants of which were a holy race; while, at the same time, a connexion between them and Carthage is indistinctly intimated. Diodorus Siculus also gives an account, on the authority of some ancient writers, of an island** situated, as he says, "over against Gaul;" and which, from its

* "It has been shown by Bremer (*De Fontibus Geographorum Ptolemæi*, &c.,) a writer quoted by Heeren, "that Ptolemy's work itself, as well as the accompanying charts, usually attributed to a certain Agathodæmon, who lived at Alexandria in the fifth century, were, in reality, derived from Phœnician or Tyrian sources;—in other words, that Ptolemy, or, more properly speaking, Marinus of Tyre, who lived but a short time before him, and whose work he only corrected, must have founded his geographical descriptions and maps on an ancient Tyrian Atlas."—See *Heeren's Historical Researches*, vol. iii. Append. C.

† "Melius aditus portusque, per commercia et negociatores, cogniti."—*Tacit. Agricol.* c. 24. An attempt has been made, by some of the commentators, to deprive Ireland of most of the advantages of this testimony, by the suggestion of a new and barbarous reading, which transfers the word "melius" to the preceding sentence, and is not less unjust to the elegant Latinity of the historian, than to the ancient claims of the country of which he treats. It is, however, gratifying to observe that, in spite of this effort, the old reading in general maintains its ground; though, with a feeling but too characteristic of a certain class of Irishmen, Arthur Murphy has, in his translation, adopted the new one.

‡ Lib. ii.

§ "I believe it will be found that many of their regular priests, the Magi, or Gours, did (as the regulars of modern times and religions have done) settle missions amongst the nations in those most distant parts."—*Wise's Inquiries concerning the First Inhabitants, Language, &c. of Europe.* Sir Isaac Newton, too, as quoted by Pownall, says, "With these Phœnicians came a sort of men skilled in religious mysteries."

‖ In Numâ.

¶ De Fac. in Orb. Lunæ. "Marcellus, who wrote a history of Ethiopian affairs, says, that such and so great an island (the Atalantis) once existed, is evinced by those who composed histories of things relative to the external sea. For they relate that, in those times, there were seven islands in the Atlantic Sea sacred to Proserpine."—*Proclus on the Timæus*, quoted in *Clarke's Maritime Discoveries.*

See, for the traditions in India respecting the White Island of the West, Asiatic Transactions, vol. ii. "Hiran'ya and Su-varn'eya (says Major Wilford) are obviously the same with Erin and Juvernia, or Ireland. Another name for it is Surya-Dwipa, or the Island of the Sun, and it is probably the old Garden of Phœbus of the western mythologists."—*Essay on the Sacred Isles in the West.*

** This island has been claimed on the part of several countries. The editor of Diodorus, in a short note on his Index, suggests that it may have been meant for Britain:—"Vide num de Anglia intelligi queat."

position and size, the rites of sun-worship practised by its people, their Round Temple, their study of the heavens, and the skill of their musicians on the harp, might sufficiently warrant the assumption that Ireland was the island so characterized, did not the too fanciful colouring of the whole description rather disqualify it for the purposes of sober testimony, and incline us to rank this Hyperborean island of the historian along with his Isle of Panchæa and other such fabulous marvels. At the same time, nothing is more probable, than that the vague, glimmering knowledge which the Greeks caught up occasionally from Phœnician merchants, respecting the sun-worship and science of the Sacred Island, Ierne, should have furnished the writers referred to by Diodorus with the groundwork of this fanciful tale. The size attributed to the island, which is described as "not less than Sicily," is, among the many coincidences with Ireland, not the least striking; and, with respect to its position and name, we find, that so late as the time of the poet Claudian, the Scoti or Irish were represented as in the immediate neighbourhood of the Hyperborean Seas.*

But the fragment of antiquity the most valuable for the light it throws upon this point, is that extracted from an ancient geographer, by Strabo, in which we are told of an island near Britain, where sacrifices were offered to Ceres and Proserpine, in the same manner as at Samothrace.† From time immemorial, the small Isle of Samothrace, in the Ægean, was a favourite seat of idolatrous worship and resort; and on its shores the Cabiric Mysteries had been established by the Phœnicians. These rites were dedicated to the deities who presided over navigation;‡ and it was usual for mariners to stop at this island on their way to distant seas, and offer up a prayer at its shrines for propitious winds and skies. From the words of the geographer quoted by Strabo, combined with all the other evidence adduced, it may be inferred that Ireland had become the Samothrace, as it were, of the western seas; that thither the ancient Cabiric gods had been wafted by the early colonizers of that region;§ and that, as the mariner used on his departure from the Mediterranean to breathe a prayer in the Sacred Island of the East, so, in the seas beyond the Pillars, he found another Sacred Island, where to the same tutelary deities of the deep his vows and thanks were offered on his safe arrival.

In addition to all this confluence of evidence from high authentic sources, we have likewise the traditions of Ireland herself,—pointing invariably in the same eastern direction,—her monuments, the names of her promontories and hills, her old usages and rites, all bearing indelibly the same oriental stamp. In speaking of traditions, I mean not the fables which may in later times have been grafted upon them; but those old, popular remembrances, transmitted from age to age, which, in all countries, furnish a track for the first footsteps of history, when cleared of those idle weeds of fiction by which in time they become overgrown.

According to Strabo, it was chiefly from Gades that the Phœnicians fitted out their expeditions to the British Isles; but the traditions of the Irish look to Gallicia as the quarter from whence their colonies sailed, and vestiges of intercourse between that part of Spain and Ireland may be traced far into past times. The traditionary history of the latter country gives an account of an ancient Pharos, or light-house, erected in the neighbourhood of the port now called Corunna, for the use of navigators on their passage between that coast and Ireland;‖ and the names of the tribes marked by Ptolemy, as

Rowland insists it can be no other than his own Isle of Anglesea; while Toland fixes its site in the Western Isles of Scotland; and the great Swedish scholar Rudbeck, places it boldly in the peninsula of Scandinavia.

* Scotumque vago mucrone secutus
Fregit Hyperboreas remis audacibus undas.
De III. Cons. Honor. v. 55.

Marcianus Heracleota, too, describes Hibernia as bounded on the north by the Hyperborean Sea.

† Φασι δηλαι νησον προς τη Βρεττανικη, καθ' ην ομοιως τοις εν Σαμοθρακη τοις των Δαμιτερων και των Κορων μυστηριοις, lib. iv.

‡ L'île de Samothrace acquit une grande célébrité chez toutes les nations maritimes, par la réputation qu'elle avoit d'être consacrées spécialement aux Divinités tutélaires des navigateurs. On alloit y prier les Dieux d'accorder des vents favourables, et solliciter des apparitions ou Epiphanies des Dioscurès."—*Dupuis, Orig. de tous les Cultes*, tom iv. première partie. See, for the appearance of these twin stars, or fires, to Orpheus and his Argonautic companions at Samothrace, Diodorus, lib. 4. In some of the old Irish traditions, those African sea-rovers, called Fomorians, who are said to have visited these shores in ancient times, are represented as worshipping certain stars, which had "derived a power from the God of the Sea."—See *Keating*, p. 87.

§ "That the Atlantian, or Cabiric, superstition prevailed in Ireland, there cannot be a doubt."—*Rev. G. L. Faber, On the Cabiric Mysteries*, vol. ii.

‖ There is a remarkable coincidence between this tradition and an account given by Æthicus, the cosmographer, of a lofty Pharos, or light-house, standing formerly on the sea-coast of Gallicia, and serving as a beacon in the direction of Britain:—"Secundus angulus intendit, ubi Brigantia Civitas sita est Gallecæ, et altissimum Pharum, et inter pauca memorandi operis ad speculam Britanniæ." Whether the translation I have given of the last three words of this passage convey their real meaning, I know not; but they have been hitherto pronounced unintelligible. The passage is thus noticed by Casaubon, in a note on Strabo, lib. 3:—"Æthicus in Hispaniæ descriptione altissimi cujusdam Fari meminit."

inhabiting those parts of the Irish coast facing Gallicia, prove that there was a large infusion of Spanish population from that quarter.

So irresistible, indeed, is the force of tradition, in favour of a Spanish colonization, that every new propounder of an hypothesis on the subject is forced to admit this event as part of his scheme. Thus, Buchanan, in supposing colonies to have passed from Gaul to Ireland, contrives to carry them first to the west of Spain;* and the learned Welsh antiquary, Lhuyd, who traces the origin of the Irish to two distinct sources, admits one of those primitive sources to have been Spanish.† In the same manner, a late writer,‡ who, on account of the remarkable similarity which exists between his country's Round Towers and the Pillar-temples of Mazanderan, deduces the origin of the Irish nation from the banks of the Caspian, yields so far to the current of ancient tradition, as, in conducting his colony from Iran to the West, to give it Spain for a resting-place. Even Innes,§ one of the most acute of those writers who have combated the Milesian pretensions of the Irish, yet bows to the universal voice of tradition in that country, which, as he says, peremptorily declares in favour of a colonization from Spain.

CHAPTER II.

ANTIQUITY OF THE IRISH PEOPLE.

In those parts of the Spanish coasts with which the Irish were early conversant, the Phœnicians became intermixed with the original race, or Celts; and it would appear, from the mixed character of her ancient religion, that Ireland was also peopled from the same compound source.

The religion the Celts brought with them to this island, was the same, we may take for granted, with that which their kindred tribes introduced into Spain, Britain, and Gaul. That corruption of the primitive modes of adoration into which the Canaanites early lapsed, by converting into idols the rude stones and pillars set up by their fathers but as sacred memorials, and transferring to inanimate symbols of the Deity the veneration due only to himself—this most ancient superstition of which the annals of human faith bear record, is still traceable in the old traditions and monuments of Ireland. The sacred grove and well—the circle of erect stones surrounding either the altar or the judgment-seat—the unhewn pillars, adored, as symbols of the Sun, by the Phœnicians—the sacred heaps, or Carnes, dedicated to the same primitive worship—the tomb-altars, called Cromlech, supposed to have been places as well of sepulture as of sacrifice—and, lastly, those horrible rites in which children were the "burnt offerings," which the Jewish idolators perpetrated in a place called from thence the Valley of Shrieking,‖ while, in Ireland, the scene of these frightful immolations bore the name of Magh-Sleacth, or the Place of

* The opinion of Buchanan on the point will be found worthy of attention. "It is," he says, "an unvarying tradition, and with many marks of truth to confirm it, that a multitude of Spaniards, whether driven from their homes by the more powerful among their fellow-countrymen, or, on account of the increase of population, emigrating of themselves, did pass over into Ireland, and take possession of the places neighbouring to that island." He adds farther: "It is not probable that the Spaniards, leaving Ireland at their backs,—a country nearer to them, and of a milder temperature,—should have landed first in Albyn; but rather that, first making their descent on Hibernia, they should afterwards have sent colonies to Britain."—Lib. ii. c. 17.

† Preface to his Glossography.—In one of his letters to Mr. Rowland, Lhuyd says, in speaking of the Irish, "For, notwithstanding their histories (as those of the origin of other nations) be involved in fabulous accounts, yet that there came a Spanish colony into Ireland is very manifest." O'Brien, also, in the Preface to his Dictionary, follows the same views:—"The fact of the old Spanish language having been brought very anciently into Ireland is not the less certain, and that by a colony of the old Spaniards, who co-inhabited with the Gadeliana."

‡ Popular History of Ireland, by Mr. Whitty, part i.

§ "Since the Irish tradition will absolutely have the inhabitants of that country come from Spain."—*Critical Essay*, vol. ii. dissert. i. chap. 3. A no less determined opponent of the Milesian history, though far inferior to Innes in learning and sagacity, concedes, also, on this point to traditional authority. "At the same time, still farther be it from me to deny my assent to the tradition that a people, coming last from Spain, did settle here at a very early period."—*Cambell's Strictures on the Ecclesiastical and Literary History of Ireland*, sect. 4.

‖ Jeremiah, vii. 31, 32. This valley was also named Tophet, from the practice of beating the drums, during the ceremony, to drown the cries of the children sacrificed in the fire to Moloch.

Slaughter,*—of all these known and acknowledged features of the ancient Celtic worship, of that superstition which spread wherever the first races of men dispersed themselves, there remain, to this day, undoubted traces and testimonies, not only in the traditions and records of Ireland, but in those speaking monuments of antiquity which are still scattered over her hills and plains.

Combined with this old and primitive system of idolatry are to be found, also, a number of rites and usages belonging evidently to much later and less simple modes of worship. There may be traced, indeed, in the religious remains of the Irish, the marks of three distinct stages of superstition; namely, that first rude ritual which their Celtic progenitors brought with them from the East; next, the introduction of images somewhat approaching the human shape; and, thirdly, those monuments of a more refined system of fire-worship which still embellish this country. While some of their rites and names of deities are traceable directly to the Phœnicians, there are other religious customs which seem to have been derived, through the means of this people, from Persia.† It was on the whole the description of religion likely to spring up in a country into which a variety of modes of devotion and doctrine had been imported; and it is well known that the Phœnicians, with that utter indifference to diversity of worship which forms one of the most striking differences between the Pagan and the Christian religionist, set no limit to the varieties of creed and ritual, with which, in their career over the globe, they furnished their colonies. Being in constant communication with Persia, for the sake of the Eastern trade, it was even a part of the commercial policy of this people to encourage an intercourse, on religious subjects, between their Eastern and Western customers, of which they themselves should be made the channel, and so convert it to their own advantage in the way of trade.

The mixed nature, indeed, of the creed of the ancient Irish seems to be intimated in their mode of designating their own priesthood, to whom they applied as well the Persian as the Celtic denominations; calling them indifferently either Magi, or Druids. Thus, those Magi described, in the Lives of St. Patrick, as warning the king against the consequences of the new faith, are, in the ancient Hymn of Fiech, on the same subject, denominated Druids.

The great object of Phœnician adoration, the Sun, was, under the same name of Baal, or Bel, the chief deity of the Irish. Even the very title of Beel-Samen, or Lord of Heaven, by which the Phœnicians, with outstretched hands, invoked their God,‡ was preserved in the Pagan worship of Ireland;§ and the Festival of Samhin, or Heaven, the great Cabiric divinity, (honoured, under the same name at Samothrace,) marked one of the four divisions of the Irish year. That the worship of the Sun formed a part of the Pagan system which St. Patrick found established on his arrival, appears from the following passage of his Confession:—"That Sun whom we behold, rises daily, at the command of God, for our use. Yet will he never reign, nor shall his splendour endure; and all those who adore him will descend wretchedly into punishment. But we believe and adore the true Sun, Christ."‖ Even to our own days the names of places,—those significant memorials, by which a whole history is sometimes conveyed in a single word,—retain vestiges of the ancient superstition of the land, and such names as Knoc-greine and Tuam Greine, "Hills of the Sun," still point out the high places and cairns where, ages since, the solar rites were solemnized. It will be found, in general, that names formed from the word Grian, which, still in the Irish, as in the old Celtic language, signifies the Sun, and from which, evidently, the epithet Grynæus, applied to Apollo, was derived, marked such places as were once devoted to the solar worship.¶ Thus Cairne-Grainey, or the Sun's Heap, Granny's Bed, corrupted from Grain Beacht, the Sun's Circle, &c.

* "Magh-Sleacth, so called from an idol of the Irish, named Crom-Cruach—a stone capped with gold, about which stood twelve other rough stones. Every people that conquered Ireland (that is, every colony established in Ireland) worshipped this deity, till the arrival of St. Patrick. They sacrificed the first-born of every species to this deity; and Tigbernmas Mac Follaigh King of Ireland, commanded sacrifices to this deity on the day of Saman, and that both men and women should worship him prostrated on the ground, till they drew blood from their noses, foreheads, ears, and elbows. Many died with the severity of this worship, and hence it was called Magh-Sleacth."—*Vet. MSS.* quoted in the *Collectan. de Reb. Hibern.* No. XII.

† See Boriase, book ii. ch. 23. "On the Resemblance betwixt the Druids and the Persians."

‡ Τας χειρας οργην ως τους ουρανους προς τον Ἡλιον.—*Euseb. Præparat.* lib. i. c. 7.

§ Τουτον γαρ φησι δυον νομιζον μονον ουρανου κυριον ΒΕΕΛΣΑΜΗΝ καλουντας, ο εστι παρα Φοινιξι Κυριος Ουρανου.—*Philo. Byb. ex Sanchoniath.* See Orellius on this passage, for his view of Sanchoniathon's account of the progress of idolatry, "a cultu arborum et plantarum ad solis astrorumque cultum, a Fetischismo ad Sabaismum."

‖ Nam Sol iste quem videmus Deo jubente, propter nos quotidiè oritur, sed nunquam regnabit, neque permanebit splendor ejus, sed et omnes qui adorant eum in pœnam miseri malè devenient. Nos autem credimus et adoramus Solem verum, Christum.—*St. Patricii Confessio.*

¶ Rer. Hibern. Scriptor prol. 1 54.

From the same associations, a point of land, in the neighbourhood of Wexford, is called Grenor, or the Place of the Sun's Fire; and the ancient town of Granard, where there existed, in the fifth century, a sacred well of the Druids, and where also St. Patrick is said to have overturned an altar of the Sun, and erected a church in its place, was so named from being a site of the ancient Irish worship. On like grounds, the appellation of Grange is supposed to have been given to that curious cavern near Drogheda, which, from the manner of its construction, as well as from the pyramidal obelisk* found in its recesses, is thought to have been consecrated, like the caves of the Mithraic worship, to the Sun.† Among various other monuments of solar worship through Ireland, may be noticed the remains of a cromlech, or tomb-altar, near Cloyne, which bore, originally, the name of Carig Croith, or the Sun's Rock.

Wherever the sun has been made an object of adoration, the moon has naturally shared in the worship; and, accordingly, in Ireland this luminary was adored under the sacred name of Re. While some of their mountains, too, appear to have been dedicated to the sun, we meet with Slieve-Mis, in the county of Antrim, signifying Mountains of the Moon. Those golden ornaments, in the shape of a crescent, which have been found frequently in the Irish bogs, are supposed to have been connected with this lunar worship, and to have been borne by the Druids in those religious ceremonies which took place on the first quarter of the moon's age.‡

The worship of fire, once common to all the religions of the world, constituted also a part of the old Irish superstitions; and the Inextinguishable Fire of St. Bridget was but a transfer to Christian shrines and votaries of a rite connected, through long ages, with the religious feelings of the people. Annually, at the time of the vernal equinox, the great festival of La Baal-tinne, or the Day of the Baal-Fire, was celebrated;§ and through every district of Ireland it was strictly ordered that, on that night, all fires should be extinguished; nor were any, under pain of death, to be again lighted till the pile of sacrifices in the palace of Tara was kindled. Among the Persians the same ceremony, according to Hyde, still prevails: after their festival of the 24th of April, the domestic fires are every where extinguished, nor would any good believer rekindle them but by a taper lighted at the dwelling of the priest.‖ A similar relic of Oriental paganism exists also in Jerusalem, where, annually, at the time of Easter, a sacred fire is supposed to descend into the Holy Sepulchre, and of the tapers lighted at its flame a considerable traffic is made by the priests. To this day the custom of making bonfires on the first night of May prevails throughout Ireland;—the change of the period of the festival from the vernal equinox to the commencement of May having been made soon after the introduction of Christianity, in order to guard against its interference with the holy season of Lent.

With the worship of fire, that of water was usually joined by the Gentiles; and we find, in like manner, particular fountains and wells were held sacred among the Irish. Even that heresy, or, at least, variety of opinion, which is known to have prevailed among the Easterns on this subject, existed also in Ireland; as we are told, in the Tripartite Life of St. Patrick, of a certain Magus, or Druid, who regarded water alone as an object of reverence, considering fire to be an evil genius.¶ Hence, by his own wish, it is added, he was buried under a stone in a certain well, in Mayo, which had been long venerated by the people under the name of the King of the Waters. In another history of St.

* It was to a stone, we know, of this pyramidal shape, that the Phœnicians of Emesa offered up their vows, invoking it, as a symbol of the sun, by the mystic name Elagabalus.—See *Gibbon*, vol. i. ch. 6.—This stone, like most of those dedicated to the sun, was black; and it is rather remarkable that, at Stonehenge, which is supposed in general to have been a temple consecrated to the sun, the altar-stone has been lately discovered, on examination, to be black.

† "The monument at the New Grange exactly points out to us the manner in which the Mithratic cavern is connected wih the Mithratic pyramid."—"The narrow passage, in fact, and the stone bowls of this Irish grotto are merely the counterpart of those in the cave of Trophonius, the pagodas of Hindostan, and the pyramids of Egypt."—*Faber, on the Cabiric Mysteries*, vol. ii. The reverend writer adds, that "the island of Ogygia, which Plutarch affirms to lie due west of Britian, must certainly be Ireland, and no other."

‡ See, for a description of these crescents, Collectan. No. XIII. Gough's Camden, vol. iii.—A bas-relief, found at Autun, of which there is an engraving given by Montfaucon, represents a Gallic Druid holding in his right hand a crescent resembling the moon at six days old; "which," adds Montfaucon, "agrees so exactly with that religious care of the Druids not to celebrate the ceremony of the mistletoe except on the sixth day of the moon, that I think it cannot be doubted but that this crescent, which is of the size of the moon at that age, respects that rite of the Druids."—*Antiq. Explic.* vol. ii. part. ii. book v.

§ To this day, the annual rent which the farmers pay to their landlords, in the month of May, is called by them Clos-na-Bealtinne, or the rent of Baal's fire.

‖ See account of this ceremony, from Chardin, in Dupuis, Origine des Cultes, tom. v. 169. "Tout le peuple crédule achète aussitôt de ces bougies." This mode of increasing their income, says Hyde, is resorted to by them in addition to their tithes:—"Præter decimas excogitarunt alium sacerdotalem reditum augendi modum."

¶ L. 2. c. 20.—"This reminds us of the old Oriental contests between the worshippers of fire and those of water, and leads to a conclusion that some connexion had existed between Ireland and remote parts of the East."—*Lanigan, Ecclesiastical History of Ireland*, vol. i. chap. 5.

Patrick it is mentioned, as the motive of this holy man for visiting Slane, that he had heard of a fountain there which the Magi honoured, and made offerings to it as to a god.* Even in our own times the Irish are described, by one well versed in their antiquities,† as being in the habit of visiting fountains, or wells, more particularly such as are in the neighbourhood of an old blasted oak, or an upright unhewn stone, and hanging rags upon the branches of the trees. When asked their reason for this practice, the answer of the oldest among them is generally, we are told, to the effect that their ancestors did the same, and that it was designed as a preventive against the sorceries of the Druids. There is scarcely a people throughout the East, among whom this primitive practice, of hanging pieces torn from their garments upon the branches of particular trees, has not been found to prevail. The wild-olive of Africa,‡ and the Sacred Tree of the Hindus,§ bear usually strung upon them this simple sort of offering; and more than one observant traveller in the East has been reminded, by this singular custom, of Ireland.

There are, however, some far less innocent coincidences to be remarked between the Irish and Eastern creeds. It is, indeed, but too certain that the sacrifice of human victims formed a part of the Pagan worship in Ireland, as it did in every country where the solar god, Baal, was adored. On the eve of the Feast of Samhin, all those whom, in the month of March preceding, the Druids had, from their tribunal on Mount Usneach, condemned to death, were, in pursuance of this solemn sentence, burned between two fires.‖ In general, however, as regarded both human creatures and brutes, the ceremony of passing them between two fires appears to have been intended not to affect life, but merely as a mode of periodical purification.¶ Thus, in an old account of the Irish rites, it is said, "The Druids lighted up two blazing fires, and having performed incantations over them, compelled the herds of cattle to pass through them, according to a yearly custom." But it cannot be denied that, to a late period, some of the most horrible features of the old Canaanite superstition continued to darken and disgrace the annals of the Irish; for, like the Israelite idolaters, not only did they "burn incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree," but also the denounced crime of Manasseh and Ahaz, in "causing their children to pass through the fire," was but too faithfully acted over again in Pagan Ireland. A plain, situated in the district at present called the county of Leitrim, to which they gave the name of Magh-Sleacth, or Field of Slaughter, was the great scene, as already has been stated, of these horrors of primæval superstition; for there, on the night of Samhim, the same dreadful tribute which the Carthaginians are known to have paid to Saturn, in sacrificing to him their first-born children,** was by the Irish offered up to their chief idol, Crom-Cruach.†† This frightful image, whose head was of gold, stood surrounded by twelve lesser idols, representing, it is most probable, the signs of the zodiac;—the connexion of sun-worship with astronomy

* Sir W. Betham's Irish Antiquarian Researches, Append. 29.

† Letters of Columbanus, by Dr. O'Connor, let. iii.

‡ The Argali.—*Travels in Europe and Africa*, by Colonel Keating. "A traveller," observes this writer, "will see precisely the like in the west of Ireland." Mungo Park, too, speaks of the large tree called Neema Tooba, "decorated with innumerable rags and scraps of cloth," and which "nobody now presumed to pass without hanging up something."

§ See Sir William Ouseley's interesting Travels through Persia, vol. ii. Append. No. 9.—Among the trees thus decorated, seen by Sir William in the vale of Abdui, and elsewhere, he mentions one in the neighbourhood of a stone pillar; bringing to his recollection, he says, various remains which he had seen in Wales and Ireland.

‖ From an old Irish manuscript in the possession of the learned antiquary, Lhuyd, cited by Dr. O'Connor. See also O'Brien's Irish Dictionary, *Beol, tinne*, where, however, the translation is somewhat different from that of Dr. O'Connor.

¶ The superstition of purifying between two fires appears to have been as universal as it was ancient. "Les adorateurs de feu, dit Maimonide (lib. iii. c. 38.) publièrent qui ceux qui ne feraient point passer leurs enfans par le feu, les exposoient au danger de mourir."—*Dupuis*, tom. iii. p. 740. "The narrative of an embassy from Justin to the Khákán, or emperor, who then resided in a fine vale near the Irtish, mentions the Tartarian custom of purifying the Roman ambassadors by conducting them between 'two fires.'"—*Sir. W. Jones, Fifth Discourse, on the Tartars.* "The more ignorant Irish," says Ledwich, "still drive their cattle through these fires as an effectual means of preserving them from future accidents;" and Martin tells us that the natives of the Western Isles of Scotland, which are known to have been peopled from Ireland, "when they would describe a man as being in a great strait, or difficulty, say that he is between two fires of Bel." The same superstitious practice was observed at the festival of the goddess Pales, at Rome. "Per flammas saluisse pecus, saluisse colonos."—*Ovid. Fast.* lib. iv. Of this old Roman ceremony, Niebuhr thus speaks:—"The Festival of Pales, the 21st, when the country people and the earliest inhabitants of Rome used to purify themselves by passing through a strong fire, as our ancestors used to kindle fires on May-day."

** Diodor. Sicul. lib. 20.

†† Dinseanchus, MS., quoted Rer. Hibernic. Script. prol. 1. 22. This image was destroyed by St. Patrick.—"In commemoration," says O'Flaherty, "of this memorable annihilation of idolatry, I believe, the last Sunday in summer is, by a solemn custom, dedicated throughout Ireland, and commonly called Domnach Crom-cruach, that is, the Sunday of Black Crom; I suppose on account of the horrid and deformed appearance of this diabolical spectre."—*Ogygia*, part iii. ch. xxii. "Cromcruach," says Keating, "was the same god that Zoroaster worshipped in Greece." To this one flighty assertion of Keating may be traced the origin, perhaps, of all those wild notions and fancies which Vallancey afterwards promulgated.

having been, in all countries, a natural consequence of that creed, insomuch that science, no less than poetry, may be said to have profited largely by superstition.

How far those pillar-temples, or Round Towers, which form so remarkable a part of Ireland's antiquities, and whose history is lost in the night of time, may have had any connexion with the Pyrolatry, or Fire-worship, of the early Irish, we have no certain means of determining. That they were looked upon as very ancient, in the time of Giraldus, appears from the tale told by him of the fishermen of Lough Neagh pointing to strangers, as they sailed over that lake, the tall, narrow, ecclesiastical round towers under the water,* supposed to have been sunk there from the time of the inundation by which the lake was formed. This great event,—the truth or falsehood of which makes no difference in the fact of the period assigned to it,—is by the annalist Tigernach referred to the year of Christ 62; thus removing the date of these structures to far too remote a period to admit of their being considered as the work of Christian hands.

The notion, that they were erected by the Danes,† is unsupported even by any plausible grounds. In the time of Giraldus, the history of the exploits of these invaders was yet recent; and had there been any tradition, however vague, that they were the builders of these towers, the Welsh slanderer would not have been slow to rob Ireland of the honour. But, on the contrary, Giraldus expressly informs us that they were built "in the manner peculiar to the country." Had they been the work of Danes, there would assuredly have been found traces of similar edifices, either in their own Scandinavian regions, or in the other countries of Europe which they occupied. But not a vestige of any such buildings has been discovered, nor any tradition relating to them; and while, in Ireland, Round Towers, or the remains of them, are found in places which the Danes never possessed, in some of the principal seats of these people, such as Waterford and Wexford, no building of the kind has been ever known to exist.

In despair of being able to ascertain at what period, and by whom, they were constructed, our antiquaries are reduced to the task of conjecturing the purposes of their construction. That they may have been appropriated to religious uses in the early ages of the church, appears highly probable from the policy adopted by the first Christians in all countries, of enlisting in the service of the new faith the religious habits and associations of the old. It is possible, therefore, that they might, at some period, have been used as stations for pilgrims; for to this day, it appears, the prayers said at such stations are called Turrish prayers.‡ Another of the notions concerning them is, that they were places of confinement for penitents. But, besides the absurdity of the supposition, that a people, whose churches were all constructed of wood and wicker, should have raised such elaborate stone towers for the confinement of their penitents, we have means of knowing the penitential discipline of the early Christian Irish, and in no part of it is such a penance as that of imprisonment in a Round Tower enjoined. The opinion of Harris, that they were intended, like the pillars of the Eastern Stylites for the habitation of solitary anchorets,§ is in so far, perhaps, deserving of notice, as showing how naturally the eye turns to the East, in any question respecting the origin of Irish antiquities. It is pretended that the models of these *Inclusorii*,—as, according to this hypothesis, the towers are supposed to have been,—were brought from the East by some of those Irish monks who are known to have visited the places of the Holy Land. But of any such Oriental importation, at that period, there exists no record whatever; and Adamnan, an Irish writer of the seventh century, who, in a work taken down by him from the lips of a French traveller to the East, gives an account of the Tombs of the Patriachs and other holy wonders, makes no mention of the abodes of these Pillar Saints, nor of the models which they are alleged to have furnished for his country's Round Towers. It may be mentioned, too, as one of the points in which the resemblance here assumed is wanting,

* "Piscatores Turres istas, quæ, more patriæ, arctæ sunt et altæ, necnon et rotundæ, sub undis manifeste, sereno tempore, conspiciunt."—*Giralds. Cambrens.* Dist. II. c. 9.

† The chief supporters of this opinion, as well as of the notion that these towers were intended for belfries, are Molyneux (Natural History of Ireland, Discourse concerning the Danish Mounts, &c.,) and Dr. Ledwich, in his Antiquities. As an instance of the vitality of a misrepresentation, it may be noticed that Lynch, the author of the Defence of Ireland against Giraldus, was the first who mentioned, and only upon hearsay, that the Danes were the builders of the Round Towers,—"primi erexisse *dicuntur*." The Franciscan, Walsh, professing to copy Lynch, converts into certainty what Lynch gave but as a report; and on this authority, so misrepresented, the learned Molyneux, and others, found their conclusions. See, on this subject, Dr. Lanigan, chap. 32.

‡ "A pilgrimage is called Turrish in Irish, and prayers said by pilgrims at stations are called Turrish prayers; a term peculiar to this country, and perhaps allusive to these towers."—*William Tighe, Survey of the Co. of Kilkenny.*

§ "This opinion seems to have been first proposed by a Dean Richardson, of Belturbet, from whom it was taken by Harris, who has endeavoured to make it appear probable."—*Lanigan, Ecclesiast. Hist.* chap. 32. The same opinion was adopted also by Doctor Milner.—*Letters from Ireland, Let.* 14.

that Simon Stylites, and his fanatical imitators, lived *upon*, not *within*, their high columns.

To the notion that our Irish structures were intended for watch-towers or beacons, there are the most conclusive objections;—their situation being frequently on low grounds, where they are overlooked by natural elevations,* and the apertures at their summit not being sufficiently large to transmit any considerable body of light. Their use occasionally as belfries may be concluded from the term, Clocteach, applied to some of them; but, besides that their form and dimensions would not admit of the swing of a moderately sized bell, the very circumstance of the door or entrance being usually from eight or ten to sixteen feet above the ground, proves them to have been in no degree more fitted or intended for belfries, than for any of the other various modern uses assigned to them.

In the ornaments of one or two of these towers, there are evident features of a more modern style of architecture, which prove them to have been added to the original structure in later times; and the same remark applies to the crucifix and other Christian emblems, which are remarked on the tower at Swords, and also on that of Donoughmore.† The figures of the Virgin and St. John, on one of the two Round Towers of Scotland, must have been, likewise, of course, a later addition; unless, as seems likely from the description of the arches in which these figures are contained, the structure itself is entirely of recent date, and, like the tower of Kineth, in Ireland, a comparatively modern imitation of the old Pagan pattern.

As the worship of fire is known, unquestionably, to have formed a part of the ancient religion of the country, the notion that these towers were originally fire-temples, appears the most probable of any that have yet been suggested. To this it is objected, that enclosed structures are wholly at variance with that great principle of the Celtic religion, which considers it derogatory to divine nature to confine their worship within the limits and roofs;—the refined principle upon which the Magi incited Xerxes to burn the temples of the Greeks. It appears certain, however, that, at a later period, the use of fire-temples was adopted by the Persians themselves; though, at the same time, they did not the less continue to offer their sacrifices upon the hills and in the open air, employing the Pyreia introduced by Zoroaster, as mere repositories of the sacred fire.‡ A simple altar, with a brazier burning upon it, was all that the temple contained, and at this they kindled the fire for their worship on the high places. To this day, as modern writers concerning the Parsees inform us, the part of the temple called the Place of Fire, is accessible only to the priests;§ and on the supposition that our towers were, in like manner, temples in which the sacred flame was kept safe from pollution, the singular circumstance of the entrance to them being rendered so difficult by its great height from the ground is at once satisfactorily explained.

But there is yet a far more striking corroboration of this view of the origin of the Round Towers. While in no part of Continental Europe has any building of a similar construction been discovered, there have been found, near Bhaugulpore, in Hindostan, two towers, which bear an exact resemblance to those of Ireland. In all the peculiarities of their shape,‖—the door or entrance, elevated some feet above the ground,—the four windows near the top, facing the cardinal points, and the small rounded roof,—these Indian temples are, to judge by the description of them, exactly similar to the Round Towers; and, like them also, are thought to have belonged to a form of worship now extinct and even forgotten. One of the objections brought against the notion of the Irish Towers having been fire-temples, namely, that it was not necessary for such a purpose to raise them to so great a height,¶ is abundantly answered by the description given of some

* In the deep and secluded valley of Glendalough stands one of the most interesting, from its romantic position, of all these Round Towers.

† A print of this tower at Swords, with a crucifix on the top, may be seen at the end of Molyneux's work.

‡ "Cependant, tous les auteurs, Arabes et Persans, cités par M. Hyde et M. D'Herbelot, attribuent à Zerdusht l'établissement des Pyrées."—*Foucher, Memoires de l'Acad.* tom. xxix. M. Foucher has shown, that the two apparently inconsistent systems,—that of Zoroaster, which introduced fire-temples, and the old primitive mode of worshipping in the open air,—both existed together. "Pour lever cette contradiction apparente, il suffit d'observer que les Pyrées n'etoient pas des temples proprement dits, mais de simples oratoires, d'où l'on tiroit le feu pour sacrifier sur les montagnes."

§ Anquetil du Perron, Zend Avesta, tom. ii.

‖ Voyages and Travels, by Lord Valentia, vol. ii.—"I was much pleased," says his lordship, "with the sight of two very singular Round Towers, about a mile north-west of the town. They much resemble those buildings in Ireland, which have hitherto puzzled the antiquaries of the sister kingdoms, excepting that they are more ornamented. It is singular that there is no tradition concerning them, nor are they held in any respect by the Hindoos. The Rajah of Jyanegur considers them as holy, and has erected a small building to shelter the great number of his subjects who annually come to worship here."

¶ Dr. Milner, Tour in Ireland, letter xiv. "The tower at Kildare is calculated to be four feet loftier than the pillar of Trajan at Rome."—*D'Alton.*

of the Pyrea, or fire-temples of the Guebres. Of these, some, we are told, were raised to so high a point as near 120 feet,* the height of the tallest of the Irish towers; and an intelligent traveller, in describing the remains of one seen by him near Bagdad, says, "the annexed sketch will show the resemblance this pillar bears to those ancient columns so common in Ireland."†

On the strength of the remarkable resemblance alleged to exist between the pillar-temples near Bhaugulpore and the Round Towers of Ireland, a late ingenious historian does not hesitate to derive the origin of the Irish people from that region; and that an infusion, at least, of population from that quarter might, at some remote period, have taken place, appears by no means an extravagant supposition. The opinion, that Iran and the western parts of Asia were originally the centre from whence population diffused itself to all the regions of the world, seems to be confirmed by the traditional histories of most nations, as well as by the results both of philological and antiquarian inquiries. To the tribes dispersed after the Trojan war, it has been the pride equally both of Celtic and of Teutonic nations to trace back their origin. The Saxon Chronicle derives the earliest inhabitants of Britain from Armenia; and the great legislator of the Scandinavians, Odin, is said to have come, with his followers, from the neighbourhood of the Euxine Sea. By those who hold that the Celts and Persians were originally the same people,‡ the features of affinity so strongly observable between the Pagan Irish and the Persians will be accounted for without any difficulty. But independently of this hypothesis, the early and long-continued intercourse which Ireland appears to have maintained, through the Phœnicians, with the East, would sufficiently explain the varieties of worship which were imported to her shores, and which became either incorporated with her original creed, or formed new and distinct rallying points of belief. In this manner the adoration of shaped idols was introduced; displacing, in many parts—as we have seen, in the instance of the idol Crom-Cruach—that earliest form of superstition which confined its worship to rude erect stones. To the same later ritual belonged also those images of which some fragments have been found in Ireland, described§ as of black wood, covered and plated with thin gold, and the chased work on them in lines radiated from a centre, as is usual in the images of the sun. There was also another of these later objects‖ of adoration, called Kerman Kelstach,¶ the favourite idol of the Ultonians, which had for its pedestal, as some say, the golden stone of Clogher, and in which, to judge by the description of it, there were about the same rudiments of shape as in the first Grecian Hermæ.** Through the same channel which introduced these and similar innovations, it is by no means improbable that, at a still later period, the pillar-temples of the Eastern fire-worship might have become known; and that even from the shores of the Caspian a colony of Guebres might have found their way to Ireland, and there left, as enigmas to posterity, those remarkable monuments to which only the corresponding remains of their own original country can now afford any clue.

The connexion of sun-worship with the science of astronomy has already been briefly adverted to; and the four windows, facing the four cardinal points, which are found in the Irish as well as in the Eastern pillar-temples, were alike intended, no doubt, for the purposes of astronomical observation,—for determining the equinoctial and solstitial times, and thereby regulating the recurrence of religious festivals. The Phœnicians themselves constructed their buildings on the same principle; and, in the temple of Tyre, where stood the two famous columns dedicated to the Wind and to Fire, there were also

* These edifices are rotundas, of about thirty feet in diameter, and raised in height to a point near 120 feet."—*Hanway's Travels in Persia*, vol. i. part iii. chap. 43.

† Hon. Major Keppel's Personal Narrative, vol. i. chap. 7.

‡ Cluverius, Keysler, Pelloutier, and others. "A l'égard des Perses," says Pelloutier, "ils étoient certainement le même peuple que les Celtes."

§ By Governor Pownall, in his account of these and other curious Irish remains to the Society of Antiquaries, 1774. In speaking of one of the images, which he supposes to have been a symbolic image of Mithra, he remarks, that the Gaditanians used such radiated figures, and adds, "from the known and confirmed intercourse of this Phœnician or Carthaginian colony with Ireland, all difficulty as to this symbolic form ceases." Pursuing the view that naturally suggests itself on the subject, the learned antiquary adds, "Whatever the image was, I must refer it to the later line of theology rather than to the Celtic Druidic theology of the more ancient Irish. To the colonies, or rather to the settlements and factories of the later people of Carthage and Gades, and not to the original Phœnicians, I refer those several things heretofore and hereinafter described."

‖ To a still later mythology belong the belief of the Irish in a sort of Genii or Fairies, called *Sidhe*, supposed to inhabit pleasant hills. *Lanigan*, vol. i. chap. 5. In the same class with the Sidhe, Vallancey places the Bansidhe, or Banshee,—"a young demon," as he explains it, "supposed to attend each family, and to give notice of the death of a relation to persons at a distance."—*Vindic. of Anc. Hist.* There were also the Suire, or Nymphs of the Sea, claimed by Vallancey as the Dee Syriæ; and described by Keating, as playing around the ships of the Milesian heroes during their passage to Ireland.

¶ The scholia of Cathold Maguir, quoted by O'Flaherty, Ogygia, part iii. chap. 22.

** "Πλατυτατας δε και αχμας, και αγκυς, και τετραγωνος, τω σχηματι δ' Ερμης."—*Phurnutus de Natur. Deor.*

pedestals, we are told, whose four sides, facing the cardinal points, bore sculptured upon them the four figures of the zodiac, by which the position of those points in the heavens is marked.* With a similar view to astronomical uses and purposes the Irish Round Towers were no doubt constructed; and a strong evidence of their having been used as observatories is, that we find them called by some of the Irish annalists Celestial Indexes. Thus in an account given in the Annals of the Four Masters, of a great thunder-storm at Armagh, it is said that "the city was seized by lightning to so dreadful an extent as to leave not a single hospital, nor cathedral church, nor palace, nor Celestial Index, that it did not strike with its flame."† Before this and other such casualties diminished it, the number of these towers must have been considerable.‡ From the language of Giraldus, it appears that they were common in his time through the country; and in thus testifying their zeal for the general object of adoration, by multiplying the temples dedicated to its honour, they but followed the example as well of the Greek as of the Persian fire-worshippers.§

There remain yet one or two other hypotheses, respecting the origin and purposes of these structures, to which it may be expected that I should briefly advert. By some the uses to which they were destined have been thought similar to that of the turrets in the neighbourhood of Turkish mosques, and from their summits, it is supposed, proclamation was made of new moons and approaching religious festivities. A kind of trumpet,‖ which has been dug up in the neighbourhood of some of these towers, having a large mouth-hole in the side, is conjectured to have been used to assist the voice in these announcements to the people. Another notion respecting them is, that they were symbols of that ancient Eastern worship, of which the god Mahadeva, or Siva, was the object;¶ while, on the other hand, an ingenious writer, in one of the most learnedly argued, but least tenable, of all the hypotheses on the subject, contends that they were erected, in the sixth and seventh centuries, by the primitive Cœnobites and Bishops, with the aid of the newly converted Kings and Toparchs, and were intended as strong-holds, in time of war and danger, for the sacred utensils, relics, and books, belonging to those churches** in whose immediate neighbourhood they stood. To be able to invest even with plausibility so inconsistent a notion as that, in times when the churches themselves were framed rudely of wood, there could be found either the ambition or the skill to supply them with adjuncts of such elaborate workmanship,†† is, in itself, no ordinary feat of ingenuity. But the truth is, that neither then nor, I would add, at any other assignable period, within the whole range of Irish history, is such a state of things known authentically to have existed as can solve the difficulty of these towers, or account satisfactorily, at once, for the object of the buildings, and the advanced civilization of the architects who erected them. They must, therefore, be referred to times beyond the reach of historical record. That they were destined originally to religious purposes can hardly admit of question; nor can those who have satisfied themselves, from the strong evidence which is found in the writings of antiquity, that there existed, between Ireland and some parts of the East, an early and intimate intercourse, harbour much doubt as to the real

* Joseph. Antiq. l. viii. c. 2.

† Annal. Ult. ad ann. 995.; also Tigernach, and the Annals of the Four Masters for the same year. Tigernach adds, that "there never happened before in Ireland, nor ever will, till the day of judgment, a similar visitation." The learned Colgan, in referring to this record of the annalists, describes the ruin as extending to the "church, belfries, and Towers of Armagh;" thus clearly distinguishing the Round Towers from the belfries.

‡ It is generally computed that there are now remaining fifty-six; but the Rev. Mr. Wright, in his account of Glendalough, makes the number sixty-two; and Mr. Brewer (Beauties of Ireland, Introduction,) is of opinion, that "several, still remaining in obscure parts of the country, are entirely unnoticed by topographical writers."

§ In speaking of the Prytanea, which, according to Bryant, were properly towers for the preservation of the sacred fire, a learned writer says, "When we consider that before the time of Theseus, every village in Attica had its Prytaneum, we may collect how generally the fire-worship prevailed in those times."—*Dissertation upon the Athenian Skirophoria.* So late as the 10th century, when Ebn Haukal visited Pars, there was not, as he tells us, "any district of that province, or any village, without a fire-temple."

‖ See a description of these trumpets in Gough's Camden, and in Collectan de Reb. Hibern. No. 13.

¶ See, for the grounds of this view, General Vallancey's imaginary coincidences between the Eocad of the Irish and the Bavani of the Hindoos; as also between the Muidhr or Sun-stone of the former, and the Mahody of the Gentoos.—*Vindication of an ancient History of Ireland*, pp. 160, 212, 506. The same notion has been followed up in Mr. O'Brien's clever, but rather too fanciful disquisition, on the subject, lately published.

** *Inquiry into the Origin and primitive Use of the Irish Pillar-Tower*, by Colonel Harvey de Montmorency Morres.

†† Dr. Milner, a high authority on such subjects, says of these structures:—"The workmanship of them is excellent, as appears to the eye, and as is proved by their durability."—*Inquiry, &c. Letter* 14. No words, however, can convey a more lively notion of the time they have lasted and may still endure, than does the simple fact stated in the following sentence.—"In general, they are entire to this day; though many churches, near which they stood, are either in ruins or totally destroyed."—*S. Brereton, on the Round Towers, Archæolog. Lond. &c.*

birth-place of the now unknown worship of which these towers remain the solitary and enduring monuments.

Having now devoted to the consideration of these remarkable buildings that degree of attention which their connexion with the history of the country seemed to call for, I shall proceed to notice those other ancient remains with which Ireland abounds, and which, though far less peculiar and mysterious, bear even still more unquestionable testimony to the origin and high antiquity of her people. That most common of all Celtic monuments, the Cromleach,* which is to be found not only in most parts of Europe, but also in Asia,† and exhibits, in the strength and simplicity of its materials, the true character of the workmanship of antiquity, is also to be found, in various shapes and sizes, among the monuments of Ireland. Of these I shall notice only such as have attracted most the attention of our antiquaries. In the neighbourhood of Dundalk, in the county of Louth, we are told of a large Cromleach, or altar, which fell to ruin some time since, and whose site is described as being by the side of a river, "between two Druid groves."‡ On digging beneath the ruins, there was found a great part of the skeleton of a human figure, which bore the appearance of having been originally enclosed in an urn. There were also, mixed up with the bones, the fragments of a broken rod or wand, which was supposed to have been part of the insignia of the person there interred, and might possibly have been that badge of the Druidical office which is still called in Ireland, the conjuror's or Druid's wand. In the neighbourhood of this ruined Cromleach is another, called by the inhabitants "the Giant's Load," from the tradition attached to most of these monuments, that they were the works of giants in the times of old.§ At Castle-Mary, near Cloyne, are seen the remains of a large Cromleach, called an Irish Carig Croith, or the Rock of the Sun,—one of those names which point so significantly to the ancient worship of the country; and, in the same county, near Glanworth, stands a monument of this kind, called Labacolly, or the Hag's Bed, of such dimensions as to form a chamber about twenty-five feet long and six feet wide.‖

Not less ancient and general, among the Celtic nations, was the circle of upright stones, with either an altar or tall pillar in the centre, and, like its prototype at Gilgal, serving sometimes as a temple of worship, sometimes as a place of national council or inauguration. That the custom of holding judicial meetings in this manner was very ancient appears from a group which we find represented upon the shield of Achilles, of a Council of Elders, seated round on a circle of polished stones.¶ The rough, unhewn stone, however, used in their circular temples by the Druids, was the true, orthodox observance** of the divine command delivered to Noah, "If thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone:" for even those nations which lapsed into idolatry still retained the first patriarchal pattern, and carried it with them in their colonizing expeditions throughout the world. All monuments, therefore, which depart from the primitive observance just mentioned are to be considered as belonging to a comparatively recent date.

* So called in Irish. "It is remarkable that all the ancient altars found in Ireland, and now distinguished by the name of Cromleachs or sloping stones, were originally called *Bothal*, or the House of God, and they seem to be of the same species as those mentioned in the Book of Genesis, called by the Hebrews, *Bethel*, which has the same signification as the Irish Bothal."—*Beauford, Druidism revived, Collect. Hibern.* № 7.

From the word Bethel, the name Bætyli, applied to the sacred stones of the Pagans, was evidently derived. "This sort of monument," says Scaliger, (in Euseb.) "though beloved by God at first, became odious to him when perverted to idolatrous purposes by the Canaanites:"—Odit eum quòd Chananæi deduxerunt illum ungendi seu consecrandi ritum in ritum idololatriæ.

† In Sir Richard Hoare's History of Wiltshire, there are representations given of two Cromleachs in Malabar, exactly similar to those of the British Isles. See also, Maundrell's Travels, for an account of a monument of the same description upon the Syrian coast, "in the very region," says King, "of the Phœnicians themselves."—*Muniments Antiqua.* King supposes this structure, described by Maundrell, to have been of nearly the very same form and kind as the cromleach, or altar, called Kit's Cotty House, in Kent.

‡ *Louthiana*, book iii. The frequent discovery of human bones under these monuments favours the opinion of Wright and others, that they were, in general, erected over graves. See, for some of the grounds of this view, Wright's Remarks on Plate V., Louthiana. It is, indeed, most probable, that all the Druidical monuments, circles, cromleachs, &c., whatever other uses they may have served, were originally connected with interment.

§ "The native Irish tell a strange story about it, relating how the whole was brought all at once, from the neighbouring mountains, by a giant called Parrah bough M'Shaggean, and who, they say, was buried near this place."—*Louth.*

‖ For an account of various other remains of this description in Ireland, see King's Muniment. Antiq., vol. i. pp. 253, 254, &c.

¶ ——οἱ δὲ γερόντες
Ἑζατ' ἐπὶ ξεστοῖσι λίθοις, ἱερῷ ἐπὶ κύκλῳ.—*Iliad*, xviii. 503.

For the credit of the antiquity of these stones, King chooses to translate ξεστοῖσι (I know not on what authority,) "rough, unhewn stones."

** It appears extremely probable, that all the Cities of Refuge, of which so much is said in the Scriptures, were temples erected in this circular manner."—*Identity of the Religions called Druidical and Hebrew.*

The ruinous remains of a circular temple, near Dundalk, formed a part, it is supposed, of a great work like that at Stonehenge, being open, as we are told, to the east, and composed of similar circles of stone within.* One of the old English traditions respecting Stonehenge is, that the stones were transported thither from Ireland, having been brought to the latter country by giants from the extremities of Africa; and in the time of Giraldus Cambrensis there was still to be seen, as he tells, on the plain of Kildare, an immense monument of stones, corresponding exactly in appearance and construction with that of Stonehenge.†

The heathen Irish, in their feeling of reverence for particular stones and rocks, but followed the example of most of the Eastern nations; and the marvellous virtue supposed to lie in the famous Lia Fail, or Stone of Destiny, used in the election of Irish monarchs, finds a parallel in the atizoe,‡ or silvery stone of the Persians, to which a similar charm, in the choice of their kings, used to be attributed by the Magi. Those monuments, too, known by the name of Rocking Stones, and found in Ireland as well as in Cornwall and Wales, appear in some respects to resemble that sort of natural or artificial wonders, which the Phœnicians held sacred, under the name of Bætyli, or animated stones. These they declare to have been fabricated by the god Ouranos, or Heaven,§ the deity worshipped by the Samothracians, and also, under the title of Samhin, or Heaven, by the Irish. That these stones—which moved, it is said, as if stirred by a demon,‖—formed a part of the idolatrous ceremonies of the East, may be concluded from the mention of them, by some ancient writers, as having been seen at that great seat of sun-worship, Heliopolis, or the ancient Balbic. In some instances it would appear that the Bætyli were, in so far, unlike the mobile monument of the Druids, that they were but small and portable stones, worn by the religious as amulets.¶ There were also, however, some answering exactly to the description of the Druidical rocking-stones, as appears from the account given in Ptolemy Hephæstion, an author cited by Photius, of a vast Gigonian stone, as he calls it, which stood on the shores on the ocean, and which, though it might be stirred by the stalk of an asphodel, no human force could remove.** It is rather remarkable, too, that, as we learn from a passage of Apollonius Rhodius,†† not only was this delicate poise of

* The remains, according to Wright, of a temple or theatre. "It is enclosed on one side with a rampart or ditch, and seems to have been a very great work, of the same kind with that of Stonehenge, in England."—*Louthiana.*

† Unde et ibidem lapides quidam aliis simillimi similique modo erecti, usque in hodiernum conspiciunter. Mirum qualiter tanti lapides, tot etiam, &c. &c.—*Topograph. Hibern.*, c. 18.

‡ "Atizoën in India et in Perside ac Ida monte nasci tradit, argenteo nitore fulgentem . . . . . necessariam Magis regem constituentibus."—*Plin.* lib. xxxvii. c. 54. See also Boethius, *de Gemmis.* In Borlase's *Antiquities of Cornwall*, the name of this stone is printed incorrectly Artizoe, and as no reference is given to the passage of Pliny where it is mentioned, the word has been taken on trust from Borlase by all succeeding writers. Among others, General Vallancy has amusingly founded on the typographical error one of his ever ready etymologies. "Now, *Art* in Irish signifying a stone as well as *Clock*, the name of this stone of ointment, viz. *Artidusaca*, may have been corrupted by Pliny into Artizoe of the Persians."—*Vindic. Ancient Hist. of Ireland*, chap. ii. sect. 2.

§ Ετι δε κτισμα Θεος Ουρανος βαιτυλια λιθους εμψυχους μηχανησαμενος.—*Philo. Bybl.* Stukeley, in his zeal to claim for the Druids some knowledge of the magnetic needle, supposes these moving stones, attributed by Sanconiatho to Ouranus, to have been magnets.—*Abury Described*, chap. 16. "It was usual (among the Egyptians) to place with much labour one vast stone upon another, for a religious memorial. The stones they thus placed they oftentimes poised so equally that they were affected with the least external force; nay, a breath of wind would sometimes make them vibrate."—*Bryant, Anal Mythol.* vol. iii. The following accurate description of a Bocking Stone occurs in Pliny:—"Juxta Harpasa oppidum Asiæ cautes stat horrenda, uno digito mobilis: eadem, si toto corpore impellatur, resistens." Lib. ii cap. 38.

‖ Εγω μεν ομην Θεοτευκτον ειναι το χρημα του βαιτυλου· ο δε Ισιδωρος δαιμονιον μαλλον ειναι γαρ τινα δαιμονα τον κινουντα αυτον.—*Vita Isidori, apud Photium.* But though Isidorus, according to this statement of his biographer Damascius, imagined some demon to be stirring within the stone, it is gravely explained that he did not suppose it to be of the class of noxious demons, nor yet one of the immaterial and pure.

¶ Sometimes, however, as in the case of that Bætylos which formed the statue of Cybele, and was supposed to have fallen from heaven, they must have been of a larger size. See *Remarques d l'Abbé Banier*, vol. v. p. 241.; as also a *Dissertation sur les Batyles*, by M. Falconet, *Mémoires de l'Académie*, tom. vi.

** Phot. lib. iii.————ως απο αγκιστας.

†† Τενεδω επι αμφιρυτη πιφαυσκεν, και αμαιμακετοι γαιαν
Αμφ' αυτοις· στηλας τε δυω καθαπτεσθον ετυξεν,
Ωι οτεφι, Θαμβος πεφορημενοισιν ανδρασι λωβην,
Κινυται ηχηεντος υπο πτοιη βορεαο.—*Argonaut.* l. 1.

In Tenos, by the blue waves compass'd round,
High o'er the slain he heap'd the funeral mound;
Then rear'd two stones, to mark that sacred ground,—
One, poised so light that, (as the mariner sees
With wondering gaze,) it stirs at every breeze!

The term Στυλη, here used, though in its most general acceptation signifying a pillar or obelisk, was sometimes also employed to denote a rock.—See *Dennegan*, who refers for this meaning of the word to *Hemsterh.* ad *Lucian*, 1. p. 267.

the stone produced sometimes, as among the Druids, by art, but a feeling of sacredness was also attached to such productions, and they were connected, as in the Druidical ritual, with interment.

The sacred Hills and Tumuli of the Irish were appropriated to a variety of purposes; for there the sacrifice was offered by the priest, from thence the legislator or judge promulgated his decrees, and there the king, on his inauguration, was presented with the Wand of Power. Of these consecrated high places,* the most memorable was the Hill of Usneach, in West Meath, as well from the National Convention of which it was frequently the scene,† as because upon its summit, the limits of the five Provinces of Ireland touched; and, in like manner as the field of Enna was called "the navel of Sicily,"‡ and the site of the Temple of Delphi "the navel of the earth,"§ so the stone which marked this common boundary of the five Provinces into which the island was then divided, was termed the "navel of Ireland."‖ Here the Druids, on solemn occasions, were accustomed to hold their meetings;¶ according to the practice of their Gaulish brethren, who, as we learn from Cæsar, used to assemble annually on the confines of the Carnutes, in a place accounted to be the centre of all Gaul, and there, consulting upon all controversies referred to them, pronounced decrees which were universally obeyed.**

In the peculiar sacredness attached to the Hill of Usneach, as the common limit of the five Pronvinces, we recognise that early form of idolatry which arose out of the natural respect paid to boundaries and frontiers, and which may be traced throughout the ancient superstitions of most countries. Hence mountains, those natural barriers between contiguous nations, first came to be regarded with reverence; and it has been shown,†† that the Holy Mountains of the ancient Greeks, Asiatics, and Egyptians, were all of them situated upon marches or frontier grounds. When artificial limits or Termini‡‡ came to be introduced, the adoration that had long been paid to the mountain, was extended also to the rude stone, detached from its mass, which performed conventionally the same important function. From this reverence attached to boundaries, the place chosen by the Gaulish Druids, for their meetings, derived likewise its claim to sacredness, being on the confines of that tribe of Celts, called the Carnutes.

Whenever an Irish King, or Chief, was to be inaugurated on one of their Hills, it was usual to place him upon a particular stone,§§ whereon was imprinted the form of their first Chieftain's foot, and there proffer to him an oath to preserve the customs of the country. "There was then," says Spenser, who had himself witnessed the election of an Irish Dynast in this manner, "a wand delivered to him by the proper officers, with which in his hand, descending from the stone, he turned himself round, thrice forward and thrice backward."‖‖ In an account of the ceremonies performed at the initiation of the Kings of Tirconnel, we are told that, in presenting the new king with the wand, which was perfectly white and straight, the Chief who officiated used this form of

* The worship of mountains, hills, and rivers, among the ancient Britons, is mentioned by Gildas, "montes ipsos aut colles aut fluvios . . . . . quibus divinus honour à cæco tunc populo cumulabatur," c. 2.; and that such superstition was not peculiar to the Celtic tribes, appears from the laws which, down to the eleventh century, prohibited the Anglo-Saxons from worshipping the tree, the rock, the stream, or fountain.—See *Palgrave's Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, part i. chap. 4.

† Ii certo anni tempore, in finibus Carnutum, quæ regio totius Galliæ media habetur, considunt in loco consecrato. Hic omnes undique qui controversias habent conveniunt, eorumque judiciis decretisque parent — *De Bello Gallico*, lib. vi. cap. 13.

‡ Diodor. lib. v. § Strab. lib. ix.

‖ In lapide quodam conveniunt apud mediam juxta castrum de Kyllari, qui locus et umbilicus Hiberniæ dicitur quasi in medio et medullitio terræ positus.—Cap. 4.

¶ "The Dynast, or Chieftain, had certain judges under him, called Brehons, who, at stated times, sat in the open air, generally upon some hill, on a bench raised with green sods, where they distributed justice to the neighbours."—*Ware, Antiquities of Ireland*, chap. xi.

** Cæsar, lib. vi. c. 13.

†† Dulaure, *Des Cultes antérieurs à l'Idolatrie*, chap. 8. Among the Holy Mountains of Greece, this writer has enumerated nearly a dozen, all bearing the name of Olympus, and all situated upon frontiers. Chap. ix.

‡‡ Such was the homage paid to this Deity of landmarks and boundaries, that when room was required for the temple of Jupiter Olympius in the Capitol, the seat of every god, except Terminus, was removed.

§§ The practice of seating the new king upon a stone, at his initiation, was the practice in many of the countries of Europe. The Dukes of Carinthia were thus inaugurated (Joan. Boem. de Morib. Gentium. lib. iii.) The monarchs of Sweden sat upon a stone placed in the centre of twelve lesser ones (Olaus Magn. de Ritu gent septent. i. c. 18.) and in a similar kind of circle the Kings of Denmark were crowned.—(Hist. de Danemarck.) In reference to the enormous weight of the stones composing this last mentioned monument, Mallet livelily remarks, "que de tout temps la superstition a imaginé qu'on ne pouvait adorer la divinité qu'en faisant pour elle des tours de force."

‖‖ The practice of turning round the body, in religious and other solemnities, was performed differently by different nations of antiquity; and Pliny, in stating that the Romans turned from the left to the right, or sunwise, adds, that the Gauls thought it more religious to turn from the right to the left, lib. xxviii. c. 5. See the commentators on this passage of Pliny, who trace the enjoinment of the practice in question to no less authorities than Pythagoras and Numa. The Celts, according to Posidonius (apud Athen. lib. iv.,) turned always to the right in worshipping.—Τους θεους προσκυνουσιν επι τα δεξια στρεφομενοι. This practice, under the name of Deasoil, or motion according to the course of the sun, is still retained in the Scottish Isles.—See *Jamieson's Scottish Dictionary*, *Toland's History of the Druids*, *Borlase's Cornwall*, &c.

words,—"Receive, O King! the auspicious badge of your authority, and remember to imitate, in your conduct, the straightness and whiteness of this wand."

So solemn and awful were the feelings associated with their Sacred Hills by the Irish, that one of their poets, in singing the praises of St. Patrick, mentions particularly, as a proof of his zeal and courage, that he "preached of God in the Hills and by the Sacred Founts."* With such tenacity, too, was transmitted from age to age the popular reverence for all such judgments as were issued from those high places, that so late as the time of Henry VIII. the same traditional feeling prevailed; and we have it on high authority that, at that period, "the English laws were not observed eight days, whereas the laws passed by the Irish in *their hills* they kept firm and stable, without breaking them for any fee or reward."†

Such of these Sacred Mounts as are artificial have in general been called either Barrows or Cairns, according as the materials of which they are composed may have been earth or stones; and both kinds, though frequently appropriated to the various purposes just mentioned, were, it is plain, in their original destination, tombs,—such as are to be found in every region of the habitable world, and preceded, as monuments of the dead, even the Pyramids themselves.‡ Among the Greeks, it was not unusual to erect a pillar upon the summit of the barrow, as in the instance of the tumulus of Elpenor, described in the twelfth book of the Odyssey, and still more memorably in that of Achilles, on the Sigean promontory, which is said still to bear traces of the sepulchral pillar, that once surmounted it. A similar form of memorial is mentioned by antiquaries as existing in different parts of Ireland,§ and the great barrow at New Grange is said to have originally had a stone of considerable bulk upon its summit. Of the dedication of the Cairns and Barrows to the Sun,‖ there are abundant proofs throughout antiquity; and as from Grian, the Celtic name of the sun, Apollo evidently derived his title of Grynæus, so to Carne, the term, in Celtic, for these tumuli, his title Carneus is no less manifestly to be traced.

The veneration of particular groves and trees was another of those natural abuses of worship, into which a great mass of mankind, in the first ages, lapsed; and, as happens in all such corruptions of religion, a practice innocent and even holy in its origin soon degenerated into a system of the darkest superstition. It was in a grove planted by himself, that Abraham "called on the everlasting God," and Gideon's offering under the oak was approved by the same heavenly voice, which yet doomed the groves of Baal that stood in its neighbourhood to destruction.¶ In the reign of Ahab, the period when Idolatry was in its most flourishing state, we find that, besides the priests of Baal, or the sun, there existed also a distinct order of priesthood, who, from the peculiar worship they presided over, were called Prophets of the Groves.** In the religious system of the Celts is found a combination of both these forms of superstition, and there exist in Ireland, to this day, in the old traditions, and the names of places, full as many and striking vestiges of the worship of trees as of that of the sun. Though at present so scantily clothed with wood, one of the earliest vernacular names, this country Fiodha Inis, or the Woody

* Metrical Life of St. Patrick, attributed to his disciple Fiech; but evidently of a somewhat later period.

† "A Breviate of the getting of Ireland, and of the Decay of the same," by Baron Finglas, an Irishman, made Chief Baron of the Exchequer, in Ireland, by Henry VIII., and afterwards Chief Justice of the King's Bench.—*Ware's Writers.*

‡ After comparing the primæval Celtic mound with the pyramidal heaps of the East, Clarke says, "In fact, the Scythian Mound, the Tartar Tépé, the Teutonic Barrow, and the Celtic Cairn, do all of them preserve a monumental form, which was more anciently in use than that of the Pyramid, because it is less artificial; and a proof of its alleged antiquity may be deduced from the mere circumstance of its association with the Pyramids of Egypt, even if the testimony of Herodotus were less explicit as to the remote period of its existence among northern nations."—*Travels*, vol. v. chap. 5. In the Travels of Professor Pallas may be found an account of the immense variety of these sepulchral heaps, some of earth, some of stones, which he saw in traversing the regions inhabited by the Cossacks, Tartars, and Mongul tribes.

§ See *Gough's Camden*, vol. iii.; *King's Munimenta Antiqua*, book i. This latter writer, in speaking of New Grange, says, that it "so completely corresponds with the accounts we have of the Asiatic Barrows of Patroclus and of Halyattes, and with the description of the Tartarian Barrows of the Schythian Kings, that in reading an account of one, we even seem to be reading an account of the other."—Book i. chap. 6. Rejecting as vague and unsatisfactory the grounds on which New Grange and other such monuments are attributed to the Danes, this well-informed antiquary concludes, "We may, therefore, from such strong resemblance between primæval and nearly patriarchal customs in the East, and those aboriginal works in Ireland and Britain in the West, much more naturally infer that these sepulchral barrows are almost without exception the works of the first race of settlers in these countries."—*Ib.*

‖ Silius Italicus represents Apollo as delighting in the Cairn-fires.—

"Quum pius Arcitenens incensis gaudet acervis."—Lib. v. 177.

Among the different sorts of Cairns in Cornwall, there is one which they call Karn Leskyg, or the Karn of Burnings.

¶ Gen. xxi. 33.—Judges vi. 23—28.

** "The Prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the Prophets of the Groves, four hundred."—1 *Kings*, xviii. 19.

Island, proves that the materials for tree worship were not, in former ages, wanting on her shores. The name of the Vodii, an ancient tribe inhabiting the southern coast of the county of Cork, signifies dwellers in a woody country,* and Youghall, formerly Ochill, is said to have been similarly derived. It appears that in general the old names of places, whether hills or plains, are found to be words implying forests, groves, or trees. The poet Spenser has commemorated the Ireland of his day as abounding in shade and foliage,† and we collect from Stanihurst that the natives had been accused of living savagely in the dark depths of their forests. It is, indeed, alleged, by competent authority,‡ to have been made evident from an examination of the soil, that, at no very remote period, the country must have been abundantly wooded.

The oak, the statue of the Celtic Jove,§ was here, as in all other countries, selected for peculiar consecration; and the Plain of Oaks, the Tree of the Field of Adoration,‖ under which the Dalcassian Chiefs were inaugurated, and the Sacred Oak of Kildare, show how early and long this particular branch of the primitive worship prevailed.

By some antiquaries, who affect to distinguish between the Celtic and Gothic customs in Ireland, the mode of inaugurating the Dalcassian Chiefs is alleged to have been derived from the first inhabitants or Celts; while, on the other hand, the use of the Lia Fail, or Stone of Destiny, in the ceremony, was introduced, they say, by the later, or Scythic colonies. In this latter branch of the opinion, they are borne out by the ancient traditions of the country, which trace to the Danaans, a Scythic or Gothic tribe, the first importation of the custom. That the worship of stones, however, out of which this ceremony sprung, was a superstition common not only to both of these races, but to all the first tribes of mankind, is a fact admitted by most inquirers on the subject. The same may be affirmed of every branch of the old primitive superstition; and, therefore, to attempt to draw any definite or satisfactory line of distinction, between the respective forms of idolatry of the two great European races, is a speculation that must be disconcerted and baffled at every step. A well-known dogmatist in Irish antiquities, desirous to account, by some other than the obvious causes, for that close resemblance which he cannot deny to exist between the Celtic and Gothic superstitions, has had recourse to the hypothesis, that a coalition between the two rituals must, at some comparatively late period, have taken place.¶ But a natural view of the subject would, assuredly, have led to the very reverse of this conclusion, showing that, originally, the forms of idolatry observed by both races were the same, and that any difference observable, at a later period, has been the natural result of time and circumstances.

* Quasi Britannicè dicas *Sylvestres*, sive, apud sylvas degentes.—*Baxter. Glossar. Antiquitat. Brit.*—*Smith's County of Cork.*

† *Cantos of Mutability*; where in describing Ireland, he speaks of "woods and forests which therein abound." In his View of the State of Ireland, also, speaking more particularly of the country between Dublin and Wexford, he says:—"Though the whole track of the country be mountainous and woody, yet there are many goodly valleys," &c. Campion likewise asserts, that the island was covered with forests; yet, so rapid must have been their destruction, that, not much more than a century after Spenser and Campion wrote, we find Sir Henry Piers, in his Chorographical Description of the County of Meath, complaining of the want of timber of bulk, "wherewith it was anciently well stored;" and recommending to parliament a speedy provision for "planting and raising all sorts of forest trees."—*Collectan*, vol. i.

‡ "I never saw one hundred contiguous acres in Ireland in which there were not evident signs that they were once wood, or at least very well wooded. Trees, and the roots of trees, of the largest size, are dug up in all the bogs; and, in the cultivated countries, the stumps of trees destroyed show that the destruction has not been of very ancient date."—*Arthur Young, Tour in Ireland.*

§ Αγαλμα δι Διος Κελτικον υψηλη δρυς.—*Max. Tyr.* Serm. 38.

‖ *Magh-Adhair.*—"A plain, or field of adoration or worship, where an open temple, consisting of a circle of tall straight stone pillars, with a very large flat stone, called *cromleac*, serving for an altar, was constructed by the Druids, . . . several plains of this name, Magh-Adhair, were known in Ireland, particularly one in the country now called the County of Clare, where the kings of the O'Brien race were inaugurated."—*O'Brien's Irish Dictionary.* It was under a remarkable tree on this plain that the ceremony of initiating the Dalcassian Kings took place. (*O'Brien, in voce Magh bile.*) In the Annals of the Four Masters for the year 981, there is an account of the destruction of this Sacred Tree.

For the origin of four of the great Dalcassian families, viz. the O'Briens, the Mac Mahons, the O'Kennedys, and the Macnamaras, see *Rer. Hibernicar. Script.* prol. 1. 133.

¶ The Druids, when known to the Greeks and Romans, had united the Celtic and Scythic rituals, and exercised their functions both in groves and caves."—*Ledwich, Antiquities of Ireland*, p. 49.

CHAPTER III.

THE DRUIDS, OR MAGI OF THE IRISH.

THE religious system of the Pagan Irish having been thus shown, as regards both its ceremonies and its objects, to have been, in many respects, peculiar to themselves, it remains to be considered whether the order of priesthood which presided over their religion did not also, in many points, differ from the Priests of Britain and of Gaul. Speaking generally, the term Druidism applies to the whole of that mixed system of hierurgy, consisting partly of patriarchal, and partly of idolatrous observances, which the first inhabitants of Europe are known to have brought with them in their migration from the East; and the cause of the differences observable in the rituals of the three countries where alone that worship can be traced, is to be sought for as well in the local circumstances peculiar to each, as in those relations towards other countries in which, either by commerce or position, they were placed. Thus, while to her early connexion with the Phœnicians the Sacred Island was doubtless indebted for the varieties of worship wafted to her secluded shores, the adoption by the Gallic Druids of the comparatively modern gods of Greece and Rome, or rather of their own original divinities under other names, may, together with the science and the learning they were found in possession of by the Romans, be all traced to the intercourse held by them, for at least five hundred years before, with the colony of Phocæan Greeks established at Marseilles.

Of all that relates to the Druids of Gaul, their rites, doctrines, and discipline, we have received ample and probably highly coloured statements from the Romans. Our knowledge of the Irish Magi, or Druids, is derived partly from the early Lives of St. Patrick, affording brief but clear glimpses of the dark fabric which he came to overturn, and partly from those ancient records of the country, founded upon others, as we shall see, still more ancient, and so reaching back to the times when Druidism was still in force. With the state or system of this order, in Britain, there are no such means of becoming acquainted. It is a common error, indeed, to adduce as authority respecting the British Druids, the language of writers who profess to speak only of the Druidical priesthood of Gaul; a confusion calculated to convey an unjust impression of both these bodies; as the latter,—even without taking into consideration their alleged conferences with Phythagoras, which may be reasonably called in question,—had access, it is known, through the Massilian Greeks, to such sources of science and literature, as were manifestly beyond the reach of their secluded brethren of Britain. Even of the Gaulish Druids, however, the description transmitted by the Romans is such as, from its vagueness alone, might be fairly suspected of exaggeration; and the indefinite outline they left has been since dilated and filled up by others, till there is scarcely a department of human knowledge with which these Druids are not represented to have been conversant. Nor is this embellished description restricted merely to the Gaulish priesthood, but given also as a faithful picture of the Druids of Britain; though, among all the Greek and Roman writers who have treated of the subject, there is not one—with a slight exception, perhaps, as regards Pliny,—who has not limited his remarks solely and professedly to Gaul.

The little notice taken by the Romans of the state of this worship among the Britons, is another point which appears worthy of consideration. Instead of being general throughout the country, as might have been expected from the tradition mentioned by Cæsar, the existence of Druidism appears to have been confined to a few particular spots; and the chief seat of its strength and magnificence lay in the region nearest to the shores of Ireland, North Wales. It was there alone, as is manifest from their own accounts, and from the awe and terror with which, it is said, the novelty of the sight then affected them,* that the Romans ever encountered any Druids during their whole stay in Britain; nor did Cæsar, who dwells so particularly upon the Druids of Gaul, and even mentions the prevalent notion that they had originated in Britain, ever hint that, while in that country, he had either met with any of their order, or been able to collect any information concerning their tenets or rites. The existence still, in various parts of England, of

* Novitate aspectus perculere milites.—*Tacit. Annal.* lib. xiv. c. 30.

what are generally called Druidical monuments, is insufficient to prove that Druidism had ever flourished in those places; such monuments having been common to all the first races of Europe,* and though forming a part of the ritual of the Druids, by no means necessarily implying that it had existed where they are found. In the region of Spain occupied anciently by the Turditani, the most learned of all the Celtic tribes, there is to be found a greater number of what are called Druidical remains than in any other part of the Peninsula.† Yet, of the existence of an order of Druids among that people, neither Strabo nor any other authority makes mention.

The only grounds that exist for extending and appropriating to the British Druids all that the Greek and Roman writers have said solely of those of Gaul, are to be found in the single, but doubtless important, passage wherein it is asserted by Cæsar,‡ that Druidism had first originated in Britain, and was from thence derived by the Gauls. Presuming on the truth of this assertion, it has been farther concluded, as a matter of course, that all the features of the parent were exactly similar to those attributed to the offspring; and upon this arbitrary assumption have all the accounts, so fully and confidently given, of the rites, doctrines, and learning of the British Druids been founded. With respect to the statement, however, of Cæsar, an obvious solution suggests itself, arising naturally out of all that has been advanced in the preceding pages, and amply sufficient, as I think, to account for the curious tradition which he mentions. We have seen, by the strong, though scattered, lights of evidence, which have been brought to concentre upon this point, at what an early period Ireland attracted the notice of that people, who were, in those times, the great carriers, not only of colonies and commerce, but also of shrines and divinities, to all quarters of the world. So remote, indeed, is the date of her first emergence into celebrity, that at a time when the Carthaginians knew of Albion but the name, the renown of Ierne as a seat of holiness had already become ancient; her devotion to the form of worship which had been transported, perhaps from Samothrace, to her shores, having won for her, as we have seen, the designation of the Sacred Island. Those who look back to the prominent station then held by her, as a sort of emporium of idolatry, will not deem it unlikely that a new religion may have originated on her shores; and that it was to her alone the prevalent tradition of the times of Cæsar must have attributed the reputation of having first moulded the common creed of all the Celts into that peculiar form which has become memorable under the appellation of Druidism.

Whatever changes this form may have undergone in its adoption by Gaul and Britain, were the natural result of local circumstances, and the particular genius of each people; while the greater infusion of orientalism into the theology of the Irish, arose doubtless from the longer continuance of their intercourse with the East. How large a portion of the religious customs of Persia were adopted by the Magi or Druids of Ireland, has already been amply shown; and to these latter Pliny§ doubtless refers, under the same mistake as Cæsar, when, in speaking of the Magi of different countries, he remarks of the ceremonies practised in Britain, that they were of such a nature as to render it probable that they were the original of those of the Persians. The favourite tenet as well of Druidism as of Magism, the transmigration of the soul,‖ which the Druids of Gaul are thought to have derived from the Massilian Greeks, might have reached them, through Ireland, from some part of the East, at a much earlier period; this favourite doctrine of all Oriental theologues, from the Brachmans of India to the priests of Egypt, being found inculcated also through the medium of some of the traditions of the ancient Irish. The use, both by Pliny and Cæsar, of the name Britain instead of Ireland argues but little against the presumption that the latter was the country really designed. The frequent

* For proofs of the adoption of circular stone temples, and other such monuments, by the Gothic nations, see Ledwich's Antiquities (*Pagan State of Ireland, and its Remains,*) and Pinkerton's *Inquiry*, &c. part iii. chap. 12.

† History of Spain and Portugal, Can. Cyclo. Introduction.

‡ Disciplina in Britannia reperta, atque inde in Galliam translata esse existimatur.—*De Bell. Gall.* lib. vi. c. 13.

§ Britannia hodieque eam attonite celebrat tantis cæremoniis, ut dedisse Persis videri possit.—*Plin. Nat. Hist.* lib. xxx. c. 4. On the intimation contained in this passage, Whitaker has founded a supposition, that, at some period, which he calls the Divine Age, the doctrine of the Western Druids may have penetrated so far East; "thus solving," he says, "Pliny's conjecture of the Persians receiving it from them, which must have been in times comparatively to which the foundation of Rome is hardly not a modern incident."—*Celtic Vocabulary.*

‖ The prevalence, among them, of a belief in the transmigration of the soul, may be inferred from the fable respecting Ruan, one of the colony that landed in Ireland, under Partholan, some two or three centuries after the Flood. Of this ancient personage, it was believed that he continued to live, through a long series of transmigrations, till so late as the time of St. Patrick, when, having resumed the human shape, he communicated to the saint all he knew of the early history of the island, and was then baptised and died.—*Nicholson's Library*, chap. 2.—*Rerum Hibern. Script.* Ep. Nunc.

employment of the plural, Britanniæ,* to denote the whole of the British Isles, was, in itself, by no means unlikely to lead to such a confusion. Besides, so ignorant were the Roman scholars respecting the geography of these regions, that it is not impossible they may have supposed Britain and Ireland to be one and the same country; seeing that, so late as the period when Agricola took the command of the province, they had not yet ascertained whether Britannia was an island or continent.†

To his statement, that Britain was thought to have originated the institution of Druidism, Cæsar adds, that those who were desirous of studying diligently its doctrines, repaired in general to that country for the purpose.‡ If, as the reasons I have above adduced render by no means improbable, the school resorted to by these students was really Ireland, the religious pre-eminence thus enjoyed by her, in those pagan days, was a sort of type of her social position many centuries after, when again she shone forth as the Holy Island of the West; and again it was a common occurrence, as in those Druidical times, to hear said of a student in divinity, that he was "gone to pursue a course of sacred instruction in Hibernia."§

While, from all that has been here advanced, it may be assumed as not improbable that Ireland was the true source of this ancient creed of the West, there is yet another point to be noticed, confirmatory of this opinion, which is, that the term Druid, concerning whose origin so much doubt has existed, is to be found genuinely, and without any of the usual straining of etymology, in the ancient Irish language. The supposed derivation of the term from Drus, the Greek word for an oak, has long been rejected as idle;‖ the Greek language, though flowing early from the same Asiatic source, being far more likely to have borrowed from than contributed to that great mother of the most of the European tongues, the Celtic. It is, however, unnecessary to go any farther for the origin of the name than to the Irish language itself, in which the word *Draoid* is found, signifying a cunning man, or Magus, and implying so fully all that is denoted by the latter designation as to have been used as an equivalent for it in an Irish version of the Gospel of St. Matthew, where, instead of "the wise men, or Magi, came from the East," it is rendered, "the Druids came from the East;" and, in like manner in the Old Testament, Exod. vii. 11., the words "magicians of Egypt" are made "Druids of Egypt."¶

CHAPTER IV.

ANTIQUITY OF THE IRISH LANGUAGE,—LEARNING OF THE IRISH MAGI OR DRUIDS.

Our accounts of the learning of the Irish Druids, though far more definite and satisfactory than any that relate directly to the Druids of Britain, are still but imperfect and vague. Before we enter, however, on this topic, a few remarks on a subject intimately connected with it, the ancient language of the country, will not be deemed an unnecessary preliminary. Abundant and various as are the monuments to which Ireland can point, as mute evidences of her antiquity, she boasts a yet more striking proof in the living language of her people,—in that most genuine, if not only existing, dialect, of the oldest of all European tongues,—the tongue which, whatever name it may be called by, according to the various and vague theories respecting it, whether Japhetan, Cimmerian,

* Thus Catullus:—"Hunc Galliæ timent, hunc timent Britaniæ."—*Carm.* 27.

† *Hanc oram novissimi maris tunc primum Romana classis circumvecta insulam esse Britanniam affirmavit.*—*Tacit. Agric.* 10. Plutarch, in his Life of Cæsar, asserts that the very existence of such a place as Britain had been doubted.

‡ Et nunc qui diligentius eam rem cognoscere volunt plerumque illo discendi causa proficiscuntur.—*De Bell. Gall.* lib. vi. c. 13.

§ "St. Patrick's disciples in Ireland were such great proficients in the Christian religion, that, in the age following, Ireland was termed Sanctorum Patria, i. e. the Country of Saints..... The Saxons, in that age, flocked hither as to the great mart of learning; and this is the reason why we find this so often in our writers,—'Amondatus est ad disciplinam in Hibernia,' *such a one was sent over into Ireland to be educated.*"—*Camden.*

‖ For the various derivations of the term Druid that have been suggested by different writers, see *Frichius de Druid.* pars i. cap. i.

¶ Matt. ii. 1. The Irish version is thus given by Toland:—Feuch tangadar Draoithe o naird shoir go Hirulasem:—and the passage in Exod. vii. 11. is thus rendered:—Anos Draoithe na Hégipte dor innedursanfós aran modhgceadna le nandroigheachtuibh.

Pelasgic, or Celtic, is accounted most generally to have been the earliest brought from the East, by the Naochidæ, and accordingly to have been "the vehicle of the first knowledge that dawned upon Europe."* In the still written and spoken dialect of this primæval language† we possess a monument of the high antiquity of the people to whom it belongs, which no cavil can reach, nor any doubts disturb.

According to the view, indeed, of some learned philologers, the very imperfections attributed to the Irish language,—the predominance in it of gutturals, and the incompleteness of its alphabet,—are both but additional and convincing proofs, as well of its directly Eastern origin, as of its remote antiquity; the tongues of the East, before the introduction of aspirates, having abounded, as it appears, with gutturals,‡ and the alphabet derived from the Phœnicians by the Greeks having had but the same limited number of letters which compose the Irish.§ That the original Cadmeian number was no more than sixteen is the opinion, with but few exceptions, of the whole learned world; and that such exactly is the number of the genuine Irish alphabet has been proved satisfactorily by the reverend and learned librarian of Stowe.‖ Thus, while all the more recent and mixed forms of language adopted the additional letters of the Greeks, the Irish alone¶ continued to adhere to the original number—the same number no doubt which Herodotus saw graven on the tripods in the temple of Apollo at Thebes—the same number which the people of Attica adhered to with such constancy, that it became a customary phrase or proverb, among the Greeks to say of any thing very ancient, that it was "in Attic letters."** To so characteristic an extent did the Irish people imitate this fidelity, that even the introduction among them of the Roman alphabet by St. Patrick did not tempt them into any innovation upon their own. On the contrary, so wedded were they to their own letters, that, even in writing Latin words, they would never admit any Roman character that was not to be found in their primitive alphabet, but employed two or more of their own ancient characters to represent the same organic sound.††

* Inquiries concerning the First Inhabitants, Languages, &c. of Europe, by Mr. Wise.

† According to the learned but fanciful Lazius, the Irish language abounds with Hebrew words, and had its origin in the remotest ages of the world. (*De Gentium Migrationibus.*) A French writer, Marcel, also, in speaking of the Irish idiom or dialect, says, "On peut dire avec quelque probabilité qu'il doit remonter à une époque beaucoup plus reculée que les idiomes de la plupart des autres contrées de l'Europe." This writer, who was Directeur de l'Emprimerie Impériale, under Napoleon, published an Irish alphabet from types belonging to the Propaganda of Rome, which were sent, by the order of Napoleon, to Paris. Prefixed to his publication are some remarks on the grammatical structure of the Irish language, which he thus concludes;—"Par cette marche conjugative elle se rapproche de la simplicité des langues anciennes et orientales. Elle s'en rapproche encore par les lettres serviles ou auxiliares, les affixes et les préfixes, qu'elle emploie comme la langue Hébraïque." With the types of the Propaganda, the Irish Catechism of Molloy, called Lucerna Fidelium, was printed.

‡ "La lingua Punica certamente venne pronunziata anticamente colla gorgia, e ne resta provato in quel piccol monumento che la scena prima di Plauto ci ha lasciato col carattere Letino."—*G. P. Agius de Solandis*, quoted in Vallencey's Essay on the Antiquity of the Irish Language. "In the Oriental languages gutturals abounded; these by degrees softened into mere aspirates." &c.—Rees's Cyclopædia, art. *Gothic Language*. In tracing the Eastern origin of the Celtic, Dr. Pritchard remarks, that "words derived by the western from the eastern languages are changed in a peculiar way. The most general of these alterations is the substituting of guttural for sibilant letters. May not such words, however, have been derived previously to the introduction of aspirates and sibilants?

§ "Now, if this alphabet (the Irish) had not been borrowed at least before the time of the Trojan war, when Palamedes made the first addition to it, we can hardly conceive it should be so simple. Or, if the Druids should cull it, it would be remarkable that they should hit precisely on the letters of Cadmus, and reject none but the later additions."—*Smith's Gaelic Antiquities*, chap. 4.

Huddlestone, the editor of Toland, also remarks upon this subject,—"If the Irish had culled or selected their alphabet from that of the Romans, how, or by what miracle, could they have hit on the identical letters which Cadmus brought from Phœnicia, and rejected all the rest? Had they thrown sixteen dice sixteen times, and turned up the same number every time, it would not have been so marvellous as this."

‖ Detractis itaque quinque dipthongis, et consonantibus supra memoratis, qui nullibi in lingua Hibernica extant, non remanent plures quam sexdecim simplicia elementa, quot fuisse antiquissimas Cadmeias, Plinius, et Nonnus, et antiquissimi scriptores una voce testatum reliquere.—*O'Connor, Annal. Inisfall. De Inscript. Ogham.*

¶ "If they had letters first from St. Patrick, would they have deviated from the forms of the letters? Would they have altered the order? Would they have sunk seven (eight) letters? For in every country they have rather increased than diminished the number of letters, except those of the Hebrew and Irish, which are *in statu quo* to this day."—*Parson's Remains of Japhet.*

** In reference to this proverb, Lilius Geraldus, quoting the assertion of some ancient writer that treaties against the barbarians were ratified in Ionic, not in Attic, letters, adds, "quasi, ut puto, dicat literis recentioribus."—*Lil. Girald. de Poetis.*

†† "Thus in all words begun or ended by X, instead of writing that simple character, they never chose to represent it otherwise than by employing two of the Roman characters, viz. *gs* or *cs*; a trouble they certainly might have saved themselves, at least in writing the Latin, had they not rejected it as an exotic character, and not existing in their alphabet."—*Literature of the Irish after Christianity*, Collectan. No. 5.

This mode of expressing this letter X was anciently practised by the Romans themselves; but had been disused ages before the time when it could be supposed to have been communicated to them by the Irish. Another curious point, respecting the Irish alphabet, is thus noticed by the author of *Galic Antiquities*:—"They could much easier have spared one of Cadmus's letters than some of those which have been afterwards joined to it. The Greek χ, for example, expresses a sound so common in the Galic, and so imperfectly expressed by the combined powers of *c* (or *k*) and *h*, that they could not possibly have omitted it, had it been in the alphabet when they adopted the rest of the letters."

It will be perceived, from the foregoing remarks, that I conceive the Irish to have been early acquainted with the use of letters; and such appears to me, I own, the conclusion to which—attended, though it be, with some difficulties—a fair inquiry into this long-agitated question ought to lead. In asserting that letters were anciently known to this people, it is by no means implied that the knowledge extended beyond the learned or Druidical class—the diffusion of letters among the community at large being, in all countries, one of the latest results of civilized life. It is most probable, too, that, among the Irish, the art was still in a rude and primitive state; their materials having been, as we are told, tablets formed of the wood of the beech, upon which they wrote with an iron pencil, or stylus, and from whence the letters themselves were called, originally, Feadha, or Woods. With implements denoting so early a stage of the art—a stage corresponding to that in which the Romans wrote their laws upon wood—the uses to which writing could have been applied were of course limited and simple, seldom extending, perhaps, beyond the task of transmitting those annals and genealogies which, there is every reason to believe, as we shall see, were kept regularly from, at least, the first century of our era.

By the doubters of Irish antiquities the time of the apostleship of St. Patrick has been the epoch generally assigned for the first introduction of letters into that country. This hypothesis, however, has been compelled to give way to the high authority of Mr. Astle, by whom inscribed monuments of stone were discovered in Ireland, which prove the Irish, as he says, "to have had letters before the arrival of St. Patrick in that kingdom."* It is true, this eminent antiquary also asserts, that "none of these inscribed monuments are so ancient as to prove that the Irish were possessed of letters before the Romans had intercourse with the Britons; but the entire surrender by him of the plausible and long-maintained notion, that to St. Patrick the Irish were indebted for their first knowledge of this gift, leaves no other probable channel through which, in later times, it could have reached them; and accordingly sends us back to seek its origin in those remote ages, towards which the traditions of the people themselves invariably point, for its source. Of any communication held by the Romans with Ireland, there is not the least trace or record; and the notion that, at a period when the light of history had found its way into these regions, such an event as the introduction of letters into a newly discovered island should have been passed unrecorded by either the dispensers or the receivers of the boon, seems altogether improbable.

Besides the alphabet they used for ordinary occasions, the ancient Irish were in possession also, we are told, of a secret mode of writing, such as is known to have been used for sacred purposes among the hierarchies of the East. And here, again, we find their pretensions borne out by such apt concurrence with antiquity, as could hardly have been concerted in even the most subtle scheme of vanity and imposture. It has been already mentioned, that the first Irish letters were, from the material on which they had been first inscribed, called Feadha, or Woods,—in the same manner as, according to a learned Hebraist, every word denoting books in the Pentateuch has direct reference to the material, whether wood or stone, of which they were composed.† With a similar and no less striking coincidence, the name Ogam, or Ogma, applied traditionally to the occult forms of writing among the Irish, and of whose meaning the Irish themselves seem, till of late, to have been ignorant,‡ is found to be a primitive Celtic term, signifying the Secrets of Letters;§ and, to confirm still farther this meaning, it is known that the Gaulish god of Eloquence was, on account of the connexion of his art with letters, called, by his worshippers, Ogmius.‖

We have seen that, among the inscribed monuments of stone, of which there are so many throughout Ireland, the learned Astle found proofs to satisfy him that the Irish had letters before the arrival of St. Patrick. Could some of the inscriptions, said to be in the Ogham character, be once satisfactorily authenticated, they would place beyond a doubt the claims of the natives to an ancient form of alphabet peculiarly their own. It is possible that, in a few of these instances, the lines taken for letters may have been no more than the natural marks, or furrows, in the stone; as was frequently the case with

* Origin and Progress of Writing, chap. v.

† "Il n'y a pas une expression dans Moyse ou il parle des livres qui ne puisse s'expliquer dans le sens de ces tables de pierre et de bois."—*Calmet.* The wood of the beech has been the material used for the first attempts at writing in most countries. "Non displicet a fago arbore derivari quæ Germanis adhuc hodie die *Buche*, Suecis *Boken*, Danis *Bog* dicitur." See *J. P. Murray, Animadvers. in Literat. Runic. Commentat. Soc. Reg. Scient. Gotting.* tom. ii., where a number of other curious particulars on this subject may be found.

‡ The word is not to be found in O'Brien's Irish Dictionary, and is, I believe, omitted, also in most of the others.

§ Probe noverim vocabulum Oga, Ogum, vel Ogma, Celtè significasse secreta literarum, vel literas ipsas.—*Ringelb. Antiqq. Septent.*

‖ Lucian. Hercul. Gall.

those lines, supposed to be mystic characters, upon the Bætyli, or Charmed Stones of the ancients.* The professed date, too, of the Ogham inscription, on the mountain of Callan, of which so many and various versions have been suggested, has been called in question by a learned antiquary seldom slow to believe in the evidence of his country's early civilization.† Neither does any discovery seem to have been yet made of the tomb of Fiacra, a hero commemorated in the ancient Book of Ballymote, who received his death-wound in the battle of Caonry, A. D. 390, and was buried in Meath, with his name inscribed, in the Ogham character, on his tomb.‡ There is, however, an account given in the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, on the authority of two most intelligent and trustworthy witnesses,§ of the discovery of a stone inscribed with undoubted Ogham letters, in the neighbourhood of the town of Armagh, and on a spot resembling, in many of its features, the remarkable tumulus at New Grange.‖

In addition to the consistency of this hierogrammatic mode of writing, with all else that is known of the antiquities of the country, the traditions relating to its use in sepulchral inscriptions may be traced far into past times; and among other ancient writings in which allusion to it occurs, may be mentioned the tale of the Children of Usneach, "one of the Three Tragic Stories of Eirin," in which the interment of the young lovers is thus druidically represented:—"After this song, Deirdri flung herself upon the Naisi in the grave, and died forthwith; and stones were laid over their monumental heap, their Ogham name was inscribed, and their dirge of lamentation was sung."¶

I have already mentioned, as a proof of the existence of an original alphabet in the country before the introduction of that of the Romans, the characteristic obstinacy with which they adhered to their own limited number of letters,—insomuch as that, even in writing Latin words, they took the unnecessary trouble of supplying, by combinations from their own original characters, the place of those additional letters of the Romans which they regarded as exotic. It may here be added, that the peculiar order of their native alphabet, in which B, L, I, N, stand as the initial letters, would afford such an instance of downright caprice and dictation, in mere beginners with these elements, as may be pronounced utterly incredible.

Another argument, equally strong, in favour of their claims to an original ancient alphabet, may be drawn from the use, in Irish orthography, of what are called quiescent consonants, which, though always preserved in writing, are omitted in pronunciation. If this characteristic of the language be really ancient, and not rather one of those corruptions or innovations which the bardic rhymers are accused of introducing for the sake of thee uphony of the rhythm,** there could be no more convincing proof of the existence of letters, from a very early period; as by no other means, it is plain, than by a written standard could the memory of letters, left unpronounced in speaking, have been preserved.

The state of purity in which, considering its great primæval antiquity, the dialect of the Celtic spoken in Ireland was found existing, when first that country attracted the notice of modern Europe, appears in itself a sufficient proof that the use of letters had long been known to her people. It seems hardly possible, indeed, to conceive that, without the aid of a written standard, this language could have retained to such a degree, its original structure and forms, as even to serve as a guide and auxiliary to the philologer in his researches into the affinities and gradual formation of other more recent tongues. That there may be inherent in an original language like the Irish a self-conservative principle, it is most easy to believe; but we yet perceive, in the instance of the Highlands

* "Some of the Bætyls," says M. Falconnet, "avoient des lignes gravées sur leur surface. Damascius les appelle lettres pour rendre la chose plus mystérieuse: effectivement, ces lignes que je crois être précisément ce qu'Orphée appelle rides, forment une apparence de caractères."—*Dissert. sur les Bætyls.*

† Dr. O'Connor, de inscript. Ogham.—*Annal. Inisfal.*

‡ Vallancey, Irish Grammar, Pref. 12.—*O'Conner. Fp. Nunc* 33. and *Annal. Inisfall.* 136.

§ Doctor Brown and the Rev. Mr. Young, both fellows of Trin. Coll., Dublin. In a letter from Doctor Brown (quoted in a paper, vol. viii. of the Irish Transactions,) he is represented to have said, that, "notwithstanding all that has been written, by very learned men, of the Ogham character, and some modern testimonies respecting its existence, he was extremely incredulous as to any monuments being actually extant on which it could be found, and disposed to think that literary enthusiasm had mistaken natural furrows on the stone for engraved characters: but, having satisfied himself that he was in error, he thought it a duty to the Academy to mention a monument of the kind that had come under his knowledge."

‖ "They observed enough to impress them with a strong persuasion that the hill is excavated, the entrance being very like that at New Grange. Another resemblance is in the surrounding circle of upright stones, which (together with the want of a ditch or fosse) always distinguishes such tumuli."—*Dr. Brown's Account.*

¶ For a prose version of this ancient Irish story, which furnished the foundation of Macpherson's Darthula, see *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Dublin.*

** See, for the modes by which "the bards, or versificators, were accustomed to stretch out words by multiplying the syllables according to the exigency of their rhymes," O'Brien's Irish Dict. (*Remarks on the Letter* A.) One of those methods was "by throwing between two vowels an adventitious consonant, to stretch and divide the two vowels with two different syllables."

of Scotland,* how much the dialect of the Irish spoken by that people has, from the want or disuse of a written standard, become, in the course of time, changed and corrupted; and still more remarkably in the instance of Ireland itself, where, notwithstanding its acknowledged possession of the art of writing from the time of the mission of St. Patrick, so great a change has the language undergone during that interval, not only as spoken but as written, that there are still extant several fragments, of ancient laws and poems, whose obsolete idiom defies the skill of even the most practised Irish scholars to interpret them.†

When so signal a change has been operated in the Irish language, during this period, in spite of the standard maintained, through a considerable portion of it, by a regular succession of public annalists, as well as by the writings of native legendarics and bards, it seems fair to conclude, that, if left without any such safeguards, and in the state of barbarism their absence would imply, the general speech of the people must, in time, have degenerated into a mere vague jargon, retaining but little trace of those features of relationship towards some of the most polished tongues of Europe, which induced the great Leibnitz to recommend a diligent study of the Irish language as highly conducive, in his opinion, to the knowledge and promotion of Celtic literature.‡

With respect to the medium through which the Irish may be supposed to have early received the knowledge of letters, it might be sufficient to point to Gaul as the not improbable region from whence the British, as well as the Irish Druids, may have been furnished with the gift. That the use of letters was known to the Gauls, the whole context of Cæsar's remarks on the subject proves. The single sentence, indeed, where he states that the Druids forbade their doctrines to be committed to writing, fully suffices to prove this art to have been already introduced into the country; the very circumstance of its being prohibited clearly implying its pre-existence. For all the ordinary purposes of life, they made use, adds Cæsar, of the Greek letters; and these they derived, it is supposed, from the Greek colonies established at Marseilles. We have already seen, and also on Cæsar's authority, that to Britain, the cradle and school of Druidism, such Gaulish students as wished to perfect themselves in its mysteries, resorted. Without insisting any farther on the highly probable supposition, that the Magi or Druids of Ireland were, in realty, those instructors to whom the Gauls sent their youth to be initiated in the higher mysteries, and whose rites Pliny describes as so singularly resembling those of the Persians, there would be at least no violent degree of assumption in supposing such an intercourse to have early existed between the three countries, as might have been the means of supplying the Druids, both of Britain and Ireland, with that knowledge of letters so long possessed by their brethren of Gaul.

But there is still an earlier and, as far as Ireland is concerned, more obvious channel, through which this acquisition may have been derived by her people. Those who have accompanied the course of inquiry pursued in the foregoing pages, may have seen reason to believe that the Irish, from their evident connexion both with Phœnician and Carthaginian sources, were far more early and more directly, than even the Gauls themselves, in the way of receiving a gift so familiar to most of their Eastern visiters, and which, there are good grounds for supposing, was in those days much more extensively circulated, among at least the learned or sacred classes of all countries, than it has been the fashion of modern hypothesis to admit. How wholly improbable it is, that the Irish should not have been furnished with this important knowledge from the same nation that supplied, in a great part, their creed and their ritual, the names of their gods and festivals, of their sacred hills and promontories, has already, perhaps, been more than sufficiently urged. In those parts of Spain with which the Irish were most acquainted, the Phœnicians had, from the time of Moses, established themselves;§ and, accordingly, letters are known to

* "It is well known that the Erse dialect of the Gaelic was never written nor printed until Mr. Macfarlane, late Minister of Killinvir, in Argyleshire, published, in 1754, a translation of Baxter's 'Call to the Unconverted.'"—*Shaw's Inquiry, &c.* The author of the "Claims of Ossian," also, asserts that, "till within these thirty years, the Caledonians had never possessed so much as the skeleton of a national grammar."

† Lingua enim Hibernica qua incolæ Hiberniæ et Albaniæ nunc vulgo utuntur in pluribus diversa est ab antiqua; et cum id in Codicibus scriptis pateat, quis nisi fatuis studiis abreptus non percipit, diversitatem longe majorem necessario oriri debere in lingua non scripta.—*Rer. Hibern. Script. Ep. nunc.*

The learned Colgan, in speaking of some poems ascribed to Dallan, an Irish Bishop of the sixth century, declares them to have been written in so ancient a style as to be wholly unintelligible, even to many who were versed in the ancient idiom of the country:—"A multis alioquin in veteri patrio idiomate versatis nequeunt penetrari." (Quoted by Dr. O'Connor, Prol. ii. lxxiv.)

‡ Postremò, ad perficiendam, vel certe valdè promovendam literaturam Celticam, diligentius linguæ Hibernicæ studium adjungendum censeo.—*Collectan. Etymol.* vol. i.

§ Τους δε Φοινικας λεγω μυθους, και τας Ιδεας και τας Δηλιας την αρχαιαν αυτοι κατεσχον περι τας πλανας Ομηρου.—*Strab.* lib. iii. However exaggerated may have been Strabo's hearsay account of the Turditani, who, he tells us, were said to have been in possession of poems, laws in verse, and other written monuments of antiquity, for the space of six hundred years, such an extent of assertion would hardly have been without some foundation in fact. See, for the passage, his Third Book.

have flourished in those regions before the Romans were even in existence, as Romans themselves have acknowledged.* That an island situated in the very neighbourhood of such sources of civilization, and so long connected, as it appears, with the people who were the great dispensers of the knowledge of letters in those days, should alone be excluded from an advantage enjoyed by all their other allies and dependencies, is a supposition far too improbable to be entertained.† When we add to all this, that, at the time when the Irish first broke forth, as scholars and missionaries, upon Europe, they were found in possession of modes of writing peculiar to themselves, of elements acknowledged to have no prototypes in any known language,‡ and differing in name, number, and order from those of every other existing alphabet, such a coincidence with all that we know of the early fortunes of the country, as well as with all that her own traditions lay claim to, forms a case assuredly in favour of those claims which is not to be easily controverted; while there is, on the other hand, but little more than the vague doubts and cavils of a no very liberal school of skepticism opposed to all this evidence.

It is thought that the Gauls, who, in the time of Cæsar, made use of the Greek letters derived from the colony of Marseilles, had possessed originally an alphabet of their own, which was then forgotten or superseded by that of the Greeks;§ and a similar fate seems to have attended the ancient alphabet of the Irish, as the letters adopted by them, after the mission of St. Patrick, though differing widely, as we have seen, from the Roman, in number, order, and power, bear a considerable degree of resemblance to them in shape. This, combined with the pains St. Patrick is known to have taken to introduce among them the Roman characters, warrants the conclusion, that his efforts had thus far succeeded, and that, though unable to persuade them to adopt the additional letters, or to depart from the order of their own ancient Bethluisnon, he prevailed in inducing them to attempt those rude imitations of the Roman characters which their present alphabet exhibits, and which are acknowledged to have been, not long after, adopted from them by the Saxons.‖

From the near resemblance which some Irish words, implying a knowledge of letters, such as a book, to read, to write, &c., bear to the Latin terms for the same objects and operations, it has been hastily concluded that the Romans must have first introduced these words, and accordingly that the art to which they refer must have been also previously unknown.¶ But besides that to seek the source of Celtic words in the Latin, is wholly to reverse the natural course of derivation, it might just as reasonably, on the same grounds, be concluded, that the Irish were indebted to the Romans for their first knowledge of the natural relationships of father and mother, since the words employed in the Latin and Irish to express these relations are no less evidently of a cognate origin.**

An ingenious Englishman, General Vallancey, accustomed to follow with far more zeal than judgment that clew to Ireland's antiquities which their manifest connexion with Phœnician sources supplies, has gone so far, it is well known, as to persuade himself that in certain speeches, professing to be Punic, which are put by Plautus into the mouth of one of his dramatic personages, he could discover genuine Irish. The casual coincidences he has pointed out between several Irish words and the corrupt jargon, as it is most probably, which Plautus produces as Punic, are certainly curious and imposing; and more than one writer of high authority, on such subjects, have lent their sanction to the

* In iis etiam regionibus, unde Scotorum originis cognitio eruenda est, nempe in occidentalibus Iberiæ partibus, a Phœnicibus, ab ipso Moysis ævo, habitatis, literas ante Romanorum tempora viguisse, ipsi Romani testantur.—*Rer. Hibern. Script. Ep. Nunc.*

† The same argument has been made use of by Astle against Wise, who held that the Egyptians were unacquainted with the use of letters. "As they had commercial intercourse," says this learned writer, "with their neighbours the Phœnicians, they probably had the knowledge of letters."

‡ "It follows, therefore, that, as there was no prototype to copy them (the Irish alphabets) from, they must be original."—*Harris on Ware*, chap. iii.

§ "The Gauls, in particular, had evidently lost the use of their original alphabet."—*Whitaker Hist. of Manchester*, book i. chap. 10. sect. 6.

‖ Anglo-Saxones rationem formandi literas accepisse ab Hibernis, cum eodem plane characteusi fuerit qui hodie Hibernis est in usu.—*Camden.*

¶ This was first suggested, I think, by Innes, *Crit. Essay*, &c. vol. ii. sect. 2; and Mr. Turner, in his valuable history, has condescended to follow in the same track. Innes adduces a similar reason for supposing that the ancient Irish were unacquainted with the art of numbering. See on this subject Dr. Pritchard's satisfactory work, *The Eastern Origin of the Celtic Nations*; particularly chap. iii. where he adduces proofs of a common origin in the vocabulary of the Celtic and other Indo-European languages.

** In writing these sentences, I was little aware that the case which I here but contemplated had actually occurred; and that, already on the grounds above stated, it had been sapiently concluded that the ordinary relationship of father, mother, brother, &c., were unknown to the ancient Irish.—"Close as the relation was," says Mr. Wood, "between a son and his parents, brothers and sisters, there are no words in the Celtic language distinct from those which appear to be derivations from the Latin language, and express this consanguinity. Thus *athair*, a father, seems to be derived from *pater*; *mathair*, a mother, from *mater*; *brathair*, a brother, from *frater*; *siur*, a sister, from *soror*. This opinion, which was formed from the affinity observable between the derivations and the Latin, is strengthened not only by the general mode of this uncultivated family, (the Celts,) but by the promiscuous intercourse which subsisted," &c.—*Inquiry*, &c.

supposed discovery.* The learned antiquary, however, would, in his ardour, prove too much; and, paradoxical as the assertion may appear, the more completely his pretended case is made out, the more improbable it becomes: since, to produce so close a conformity between the Phœnician and the Irish, as, in his zeal, he has endeavoured to make appear, it would have been necessary, in the first place, that the Punic language should have undergone no considerable change during the six centuries that elapsed from the foundation of Carthage till the time when Plautus wrote; and that, in the next place, Ireland herself should not only have been colonized directly from Carthage, but have retained the language, through so many centuries, little altered from its first source.† But the mere statement of such an hypothesis is a sufficient exposure of its absurdity. That process of corruption by which the primitive language, or languages of Europe, came to be broken up into so great a variety of dialects has continued to operate with the same rapidity ever since, till not only have the different nations, at this day, all distinct tongues, but even the early form of each of these tongues has become, in the course of a few centuries, wholly unintelligible to the direct descendants of those who first wrote and spoke it. Even in ancient times, so widely had some of the Celtic nations already departed from their common language, that, as appears from Polybius, it was only through the medium of an interpreter that the Carthaginians, in the time of Hannibal, could hold communication with the Gauls.

In their prohibition of the use of letters, as a means of communicating instructions, lay the essential point of difference between the Gaulish and Irish Druids. The declared principle upon which the former abstained from recording their science—a principle held by them, we know, in common with most of the sages of antiquity—was, that Memory being the greatest living depositary of knowledge, it was to be feared that, if once accustomed to consign her treasures to writing, she might feel absolved from the high trust, and, by degrees, relax in her guardianship of the precious stores committed to her.‡ That, on this speculative point, the Irish Magi differed from the Druids of Gaul, is proved by their possession, as we have seen, of a secret form of writing, expressly designed at once to transmit the sacred learning to their successors, and yet effectually conceal it from the inquisitive eyes of the profane.

Wherever the worship of the heavenly bodies has prevailed, there astronomy, as the natural handmaid of such a religion, has been found likewise to flourish; and the Phœnicians, the great sun-worshippers of antiquity, were also the greatest astronomers.§ The skill of the Irish Druids in this science would seem, in one very important particular, to have outgone that of their brethren of Gaul, who measured the year, as we collect from Pliny, but by lunations, or revolutions of the moon, whereas, the Irish appear to have attained some glimmering notion of the mode of reconciling, by the means of intercalary days, the difference between the lunar and solar year. This, they are alleged to have effected by adding to the 360 days, of which the twelve lunations consisted, five days and

* Lord Rosse (*Defence of ancient Ireland*) and Sir William Betham;—the latter a practised Irish scholar. See his *Gael and Cymbri*.

In some instances the Punic of Plautus and the Irish confronted with it by Vallancey, are almost identical, as will be seen by the following specimen:—

PLAUTUS.

Byth lym mo thym noctothii nel ech an ti daisc machon
Ys i de lebrim thyfe lyth chy lys chon temlyph ula.

IRISH.

Beth liom! mo thime noctaithe, niel ach an ti daisic mac coinne
Is i de leabbraim tafach leith, chi lis con teampluibh ulla.

See, for the rest, Vallancey's Irish Grammar.

It appears, from a late disclosure (See *Hardiman's Irish Minstrelsy*, Introduction,) that this curious discovery of Irish in Plautus, by which Vallancey gained so much celebrity, is, after all, not his own, but was borrowed, without any acknowledgment, from a manuscript which came, by accident, into his hands.

† Lord Rosse, Defence of Ireland.

‡ See a remarkable passage, in the Phædrus of Plato, of which the above is the substance, where the god Thoth is represented as recommending his invention of letters to a king of Egypt, and is answered, in a strain of acute observation, by the king. Whatever may be thought of the soundness of his arguments, as directed against all use of letters whatsoever, to a very general diffusion of that gift they will be found, I fear, but too applicable. "I would lead men," says the king, "to a sort of false and useless learning, teaching them opinions, not truth—Σοφιας δη τους μαθητας δοξαν ουκ αληθειαν ποιξεις—the natural consequence of which is, that they will become opinionated, not wise—Δοξοσοφοι αντι σοφων."

§ "That which hath given the Sabians the greatest credit among the people of the East is, that the best of their astronomers have been of this sect; for the stars being the gods they worshipped, they made them the chief subject of their studies."—*Prideaux's Connexion*, book iii. part. i.

a quarter of the period annually devoted by them to the celebration of their ancient Taltine Games.*

The very custom, indeed, of a great annual festival existing, for any time, among a people, would seem, of itself, to imply that, in regulating the length of their year, they employed some more certain measure than the revolutions of the moon; since otherwise, the same confusion must, in time, have arisen, on the recurrence of such a festival, as provoked the ridicule of Aristophanes against the calendar of the Greeks. But, among the Irish, there appear to have been observed, at least, three annual festivals, each marking one of those *Raths*, or quarters, into which their year was divided. Beginning the year, in the manner of the Persians, at the Vernal Equinox, they then solemnized their great Fire Feast, La Bealtinne; and the second Rath, which commenced at the Summer Solstice, and was called the Course, or Season of Gaiety, they signalized by the celebration of the Taltine Games, or Sports. In three months after were performed, in the Field of Howling, those dreadful sacrifices, of which mention has already been made, and by which the opening of the third Rath, or Autumnal Equinox, was commemorated.† The remaining three months of the year, unmarked, as far as appears, by any periodical solemnity, except the usual lighting up of fires on the high places, constituted the fourth Rath, or quarter.

The degree of knowledge as to the equinoctial and solstitial points, which this division of the twelve months seems to imply, would incline us to believe, that the ancient Irish were not entirely unacquainted with that first approach to a correct measure of time, the luni-solar year; and some of the terms employed, in their language, on the subject, tend to confirm this view. Thus, the year was called by them Bel-ain, or the Circle of the Sun, while the Zodiac they named Beach-Grian, or the Revolution of the Sun; and the Solstices were termed Grian-stad, or the Sun's stopping places. It has been conjectured, and with much probability, that the stone circles of the Druids were employed no less as rude observatories than as places of judicature and worship; and the position, in most of them, of the great perpendicular stones, of which some, it is said, are placed generally in or near the meridian of the spot, while others are as carefully stationed to the right or left of the centre,‡ would seem to indicate, in their construction, some view to astronomical purposes.§ It is remarked, too, that they are situated chiefly on eminences commanding an extensive range of horizon; and a circle thus placed, in Merionethshire, is called Cerig Brudyn, or the Astronomer's Stones, or Circle.‖ A similar monument, bearing much the same designation, is described by antiquaries as existing near Dundalk.

In addition to this and other remains, supposed to have been connected as well with astronomy as with religion, the ancient Irish had also their Round Towers, or Fire-Temples, which appear to have been applied to the same double purpose. It is, indeed, highly probable, from the name "Celestial Indexes" affixed to them by the chroniclers, that one of the chief uses of these structures was to stand as gigantic gnomons, and by their shadows measure, from solstice to solstice, the gradual increase and decrease of the day.

From a passage which occurs in an old life of Moctheus, the first Bishop of Louth,¶ it has been conjectured that the division of time, by the week or cycle of seven days, was not unknown to the Pagan Irish; and if there be any good grounds for such a notion, it affords an additional confirmation of the very early origin claimed for Druidism; since it appears, that soon after the lapse of mankind into idolatry, the observance of the Mundane week fell every where into disuse, excepting only among the family of Abraham, by whom it was faithfully preserved, and from them transmitted down through the descendants of Ishmael to the Mahometans.**

* Quemadmodum in nostro Civili Computo, annus, universali consensus constat diebus tantum 365, excepto quovis anno quarto seu Bissextili dierum 366, sic etiam apud Druidos Hibernos invaluisse assero artem, qua Ludos Taltinios ad Solstitia, expletis Lunationibus 12 accommodabant, quinque dies cum quadrante addentes anno Lunari dierum 360, ut popularem annum adimplerent.—*Rer. Hibern. Script. Prol.* 1. 34.

† Rer. Hibern. Script. Ep. Nunc.

‡ King's Munimenta Antiqua. vol. i.

§ For the same purpose, it would appear that upright stones and rocks were employed by the Goths and Sucons "They have no use," says Olaus, "of sun-dials, but they use only the high stones of rocks that are placed partly by nature, partly by cunning, that by an infallible conjecture do overshadow the sunbeams and distinguish the parts of the day."—*Olaus Magnus*, book i. chap. 19.

In the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, vol. xiv., may be found an account of a remarkable old building on the north side of Kenmare river, called Staigue Fort, and supposed, by Mr. Nimmo, to have been originally intended for an observatory. See his reasons annexed to the essay.—"It appeared to me," he says, "that the structure exhibited a sort of rude graduation of the horizon."

‖ "There is also, in Ireland," says King, "an astronomer's hill belonging to the Druids, called Carrick Edmond, which cannot but remind us of the Kerrig Edris in Wales."

¶ Peractis vero, ut moris erat Gentilium, diebus septem exequiarum.

** This view of the history of the Sabbatical institution may be found argued at some length, and upon apparently solid grounds, by a commentator on Pliny, lib. xvi. c. 95. (Valpy's Edition.) This writer, however, denies that the Druids were acquainted with the hebdomadal cycle. "Quod hic obiter annotandum

CHAPTER V.

POETIC, OR BARDIC, ACCOUNT OF THE EARLY INHABITANTS OF IRELAND.

So intermixed together are reality and fiction in the first record of most nations, and each, in passing through the medium of tradition, assumes so deceivingly the features of the other, that the attempt to distinguish between them is a task of no ordinary responsibility; more especially where national vanity has become interested in the result; or where, as in the case of Ireland, a far deeper feeling of wounded pride seeks relief from the sense of present humiliation and suffering, in such indistinct dreams of former glory.

As the earliest chroniclers, too, of most countries, have been poets, the duty of stripping off those decorations and disguises in which matter of fact comes frequently arrayed from such hands, is, in general, the first the historian is called upon to perform; and often, in attempting to construct truth out of materials so shadowy, History has become but the interpreter of the dreams of Poesy. By this process it is that the fanciful fictions of Greece and of Egypt have been resolved into real records of human personages and events; and even their gods, dislodged from their high station, have been brought back by history to the humble earth from whence they sprung. Far different, however, from the mythic traditions of these classical nations are the dry memorials of past adventures and personages which our native historians have handed down; and while to the Greeks belonged the power of throwing gracefully the veil of fiction over reality, the Bardic Historians may lay claim to the very different merit of lending to the wildest and most extravagant fictions the sober lineaments of fact.

Respecting the degree of credit due to the early history of Ireland, two directly opposite opinions are entertained;—both equally, as in all such occasions, removed from the fair medium of truth. While to some the accounts given by the Bardic writers of all that passed in the ancient Pagan times appear undeserving of any credit whatsoever,—their opinion being, that it is only with the dawn of the Christian faith in that country, that its history begins to assume any credible shape—there are others, on the contrary, who believe in all that flatters their feeling of national glory, surrendering their reason wilfully to the guidance of fanciful historians, who, by means of a deceptive system of chronology, have invested fable with much of the grave and authoritative aspect of history. Between these two extreme views of the subject, the over-skeptical and the credulous, a just medium may, as in most such cases, be found; and the true value of our traditionary memorials be correctly ascertained, without either questioning indiscriminately their claims to credence with the one party, or going headlong into the adoption of all their fictions and extravagances with the other.

The publication, by Doctor O'Connor, the late reverend librarian of Stowe, of the Irish Chronicles, in their original language, accompanied by a Latin translation and explanatory notes, has, for the first time,* put the world in possession of the means of judging for itself of the truth and value of documents which had before only been known through the reports of modern Irish writers, conveyed in all the vagueness of allusion and mist of paraphrase.

To the real importance of these records, which differ wholly, in form, matter, and authenticity, from those compilations of the middle ages of which mention has just been

est, mirum profecto nullum apud Romanos Græcosve vel hos etiam Druidos, hebdomadarum usum fuisse. Cyclum scilicet septem dierum Deum ipsummet habet auctorem: sed Abrahæ temporibus neglectus ab hominibus quia essent in idolotatriam omnes fere prolapsi. Sola hunc ser vavit Abrahæ domus: et mos solis Abrahæ posteris est cognitus."

According to one of Whitaker's etymological conjectures, not only did the British Druids observe the cycle of seven days, but the name Sabaith, he thinks, was likewise given by them to their Sunday, or Day of the Sun, though bearing an entirely different meaning from that of the Sabbath of the Jews; "and it was in order," he says, "to take advantage of this accidental coincidence, that the Jewish Sabbath was transferred by the Christians to the Druidical Sunday."—*Celtic Vocabulary*, p. 94.

* In the work of Keating, written originally in Irish, are imbodied most of the old national traditions; but, besides that he has strung them together without any selection or judgment, and but seldom attempts to discriminate between the record of the annalist and the fable of the bard, his work has to answer, it seems, for even more than its own original extravagances, as some of the fictions that most disfigure it, and have most contributed to draw down ridicule on Irish history, are said to have been the fraudulent interpolations of his translator, Dermod O'Connor. The aptest description of Keating's book is that given by the clever and turbulent Peter Talbot, who pronounces it "Insigne plane, sed insanum opus."

made, there will occur, in the course of this work, opportunities of more particularly adverting. Our business, at present, as well with them as with the other class of documents alluded to, which, though branching out so extravagantly into fable, have often their roots laid deep in traditional truth, must be to refer to them merely as repositories of the ancient traditions of the country, as retaining traces of those remote times to which no history reaches, and as, therefore, of use in the task imposed upon all inquirers into the first origin of a people,—that of seeking, through the dim vista of tradition, some glimmerings of truth. And even here, in this obscure region of research, it is far less in the actual events related by the Bards and Seanachies, than in the absurdly remote period to which the first links of their chain of tradition is carried, that any very insurmountable obstacle to our belief in most of their narratives lies: and this disposition to extend and elevate their antiquity, has marked the first imperfect attempts at chronology in all countries. Even among some whose history, in other respects, has received the authenticating sanction of ages, the same ambition is known to have prevailed. Thus, in the calculations of the Egyptians, the interval between two of their kings was made to occupy no less a period than 11,340 years; and yet that two such kings really existed, and were named Menes and Sethon, is accounted by no means the less probable or historical for this absurd flight of calculation; nor is it at all questioned, that under the serene skies of Chaldæa astronomy may have had its birth, because that people boasted of having made observations upon the stars through a period of 470,000 years.

So far back in the night of time have our Bardic Historians gone in quest of materials, that, from the very first age of the world, we find marked out by them a regular series of epochs, which have each been signalized by the visit of some new colony to their shores. Beginning a few weeks before the Flood, when, as they say, a niece of Noah, named Cesara, arrived with a colony of antediluvians upon the Irish coast,* they from thence number, through the lapse of ages, no less than five or six different bands of adventurers, by which the island, at various intervals, had been conquered and colonized.

To dwell, at any length, on the details of the earlier of these settlements,—details possessing neither the certainty of history, nor the attractiveness of fable,—can hardly be deemed necessary. Still so much of truth is occasionally intermixed with their fictions, and so many curious, if not important speculations, have arisen out of this period of Irish history, that to pass it over without some degree of notice, would be to leave the task attempted in these pages incomplete.

From the time of Cesara, who is allowed on all hands to have been a purely fabulous personage, there occurs no mention of any colony till about the beginning of the fourth century after the Flood, when Ireland was invaded, and taken possession of, by a chief, of the race of Japhet, named Partholan, who, landing at Imbersciene, in Kerry, says O'Flaherty, "the 14th day of May, on a Wednesday," fixed his residence in the province of Ulster, upon an island named Inis-Samer, in the river Erne. The fables related by the Irish bards respecting Partholan,—his faithless wife, her favourite greyhound, the seven lakes that burst forth after his arrival,—may all be found in the rhyming form that best suits them, in the marvellous pages of Keating. After holding possession of the country for three hundred years, the race of Partholan were all swept away by a plague; and the Hill of Howth, then called Ben-Heder, was the scene of the most awful ravages of this pestilence.

To this colony succeeded another, about the time, it is said, of the patriarch Jacob, who were called, from the name of their leader, Nemedians, and are said to have come from the shores of the Euxine Sea. The fierce wars waged by this people with the Fomorians, a tribe of African sea-rovers, who then infested the coast of Ireland, forms one of the most picturesque subjects of the ancient Irish Muse. The stronghold of these African mariners, who are supposed, not improbably, to have been Carthaginian traders, was the Tower of Conan, which stood upon an island on the sea-coast of Ulster, named from this structure Tor-inis, or the Island of the Tower. This fortress the Nemedians stormed; and, after dislodging from thence their formidable enemy, left not a trace of the mighty structure standing. An Irish poem called "The Storming of the Tower of Conan," still exists in the noble library of Stowe. The Fomorians, however, having been joined by fresh supplies of force, a general battle, by land and sea, ensued, in which

* According to Bardic authorities, cited by Keating, the arrivals in Ireland, before the Deluge, were numerous; and, among other visitors, three daughters of Cain are mentioned. The famous White Book, so much ridiculed by some of the Scotch controversialists, is the authority cited for this story. See chapter headed, "Of the first Invasion of Ireland before the Flood."

It is probable that for most, if not all, of the wild inventions respecting Partholan and the Nemedians, we are indebted to a poet or Seanachie of the tenth century, named Eochaidh O'Floinn, of whose numerous writings an account may be found in the Transactions of the Iberno-Celtic Society for 1820.

the Africans were victorious, and the Nemedian colony being all dispersed and destroyed, the country was once more left at the mercy of those foreign marauders, and relapsed into wildness and desolation for the space of two hundred years.

The next, and, in number, the third, of these colonies, which was known to the Irish, by the name of Fir-Bolgs, first imposed upon them, it is said, the yoke of regal authority, and dividing the island into five parts or provinces, established that pentarchal form of government, which continued, with but few interruptions, till the twelfth century of our era. The five sons of Dela, under whose command the colony had landed, shared the kingdom, according to this division, between them,* placing a stone in the centre of the island at the spot where their five shares met. Their tenure of royalty, however, was but short; for, not more than thirty or forty years had this quintuple sovereignty remained in their hands, when they were dispossessed by the Tuatha-de-Danaan, a people famed for necromancy, who, after sojourning for some time in Greece, where they had learned this mysterious art, proceeded from thence to Denmark and Norway, and became possessors, while in those countries, of certain marvellous treasures, among which were the Stone of Destiny, the sorcerer's spear, and the magic caldron. Armed with these wonderful *gifts*,† the tribe of the Danaans next found their way to Scotland, and, after a rest there for some years, set sail, under the auspices of their chieftain, Nuad of the Silver Hand,‡ for Ireland. Here, landing secretly, under cover of a mist which their enchantments had raised, these sorcerers penetrated into the country, and had reached Sliabh an Iaruinn, the Mountain of Iron, between the lakes of Allen and Eirne, before their presence was discovered. The alarmed Belgians, thus taken by surprise, retreated before them rapidly into Connaught, where, at Moytura, on the borders of Lake Masg, that sanguinary battle took place, which, under the name of the Battle of the Field of the Tower, was long a favourite theme of Irish song.§ Defeated signally by their invaders, the Belgians fled to the Isle of Man, North Aran,‖ and the Hebrides, and the victorious Danaans became in their turn sole masters of the country.

In process of time, the Tuatha-de-Danaan were themselves dispossessed of their sway: a successful invasion from the coast of Spain having put an end to the Danaanian dynasty, and transferred the sceptre into the hands of that Milesian or Scotic race, which, through so long a series of succeeding ages, supplied Ireland with her kings. This celebrated colony, though coming directly from Spain, was originally, we are told, of Scythic race, and its various migrations and adventures before reaching its Isle of Destiny in the West, are detailed by our Bards, with all that fond and lingering minuteness in which fancy, playing with its own creations, so much delights to indulge. Grafting upon this Scythic colony the traditional traces and stories of their country, respecting the Phœnicians, they have contrived to collect together, without much regard to either chronology, history, or geography, every circumstance that could tend to dignify and add lustre to such an event;—an event upon which not only the rank of their country itself in the heraldry of nations depended, but in which every individual, entitled by his Milesian blood to lay claim to a share in so glorious a pedigree, was interested. In order more completely to identify the ancestors of these Scythic colonists with the Phœnicians, they relate that by one of them, named Fenius, to whom the invention of the Ogham character is attributed, an academy for languages was instituted upon the Plain of Shenaar, in which that purest dialect of the Irish, called the Bearla Feini, was cultivated.

From thence tracing this chosen race in their migrations to different countries, and

* According to Hanmer's Chronicle, there arose dissensions between these brothers, and the youngest, Slaingo, having, (as Hanmer expresses it,) "encroached round about the middle stone and fixed meare aforesaid," usurped at length the sole rule of the country.

† In one of the old Irish romances, on the subject of Finn Mac Combal, that hero is imagined to have derived a portion of his knowledge from the waters of a certain magical fountain, which was in the possession of the Tuatha-de-Danaan, and of which a single draught was sold for three hundred ounces of gold.

‡ So called from an artificial silver hand, which he wore to supply the loss sustained from a wound he received in the battle of Moytura. We are told seriously by O'Flaherty, that "Cred, a goldsmith, formed the hand, and Miach, the son of Dian Kect, well instructed in the practical parts of chirurgery, set the arm."—*Ogygia*, part iii. ch. 10.

One of the grandsons of this Nuad, named Brittanus, or Maol Briotan, is said to have passed over, after their defeat, into North Britain; and from him, according to the Psalter of Cashel, the Britons derived their origin. To this tradition Camden alludes, in a note on his Introduction.—"Brittannia dicta est a quodam qui vocabatur Britannus." There is also another of the grandsons of Nuad, named Simon Breac, who is made to play a distinguished part in the Scotch version of our Milesian story; being represented therein as the importer of the famous Stone of Destiny, and even substituted, in place of Heremon, as the founder of the Milesian monarchy. (*Fordun*, l. i. c. 26. See, also, *Stillingfleet's Origin. Britan.* cap. 5.) The Scotch antiquarians, however, seem to have confounded this primitive Simon Breac with another of the same name, also grandson of a King Nuad, who flourished four centuries later. See Innes, vol. ii. sect. 2.

§ "There are in the library of Stowe," says Dr. O'Connor, "no less than five metrical chronicles, in which this battle of Moytura is commemorated."—*Rer. Hibern. Script. Prol.* ii. 37.

‖ See Sketch of the History and Antiquities of the Southern Isles of Aran, by John T. O'Flaherty, Trans. of Royal Irish Academy, vol. xiv.

[illegible] them by marriage or friendship, during their long sojourn in Egypt, with most of the heroes of Scripture history, our Bards conduct them at length, by a route, not very intelligible, to Spain. There, by their valour and enterprise, they succeed in liberating the country from its Gothic invaders,* and, in a short time, make themselves masters of almost the whole kingdom. Still haunted, however, in the midst of their glory, by the remembrance of a prophecy, which had declared that an island in the Western Sea was to be their ultimate place of rest, the two sons of their great leader, Milesius, at length fitted out a grand martial expedition, and set sail, in thirty ships, from the coast of Gallicia for Ireland. According to the Bardic chronology, 1300 years before the birth of Christ, but according to Nennius, Ængus,† and others, near five centuries later, this "lettered and martial colony," (to use the language of one of its most zealous champions,)‡ arrived under the command of the sons of Milesius, on the Irish coasts; and having effected a landing at Inbher Sceine, the present Bantry Bay, on Thursday, the first of May, A. M. 2934,§ achieved that great and memorable victory over the Tuatha-de-Danaan,‖ which secured to themselves and their princely descendants, for more than 2000 years, the supreme dominion over all Ireland.

CHAPTER VI.

HISTORICAL VIEW OF THE COLONIZATION OF IRELAND.

When stripped of their fanciful dates, and reduced within due bounds of antiquity, these traditions of the first settlements in Ireland, however fabulously coloured, may be taken as preserving the memory of some of those early invasions, of which, in times when the migratory spirit was alive over the whole earth, this island must frequently have been the object. The story of a colony, in remote ages, under a chieftain of the race of Japhet, falls in with the hypothesis of those who, in tracing westward the migration of

* We have here a specimen of that art of annihilating both space and time which is so prodigally exhibited throughout the Milesian story. Among the many different nations that in succession became masters of Spain, the occupation of that kingdom by the Goths, which is here assumed as having taken place in the remote Milesian times, did not really occur till about the beginning of the fifth century of our era.

† *Psalter-na-Rann.* Ængus is here referred to merely as the putative author of this work, a high authority having pronounced that there are no grounds for attributing it to him. (Lanigan, *Ecclesiastical History of Ireland*, vol. 3. c. 20.) The very nature, indeed, of some of the contents of this Psalter, if, as Bishop Nicholson asserts, it contains a catalogue of the kings of Ireland, from Heremon down to Brian Boroimhe, who was slain in 1014, shows that it could not have been the production of a writer of the eighth century.

‡ *Dissertations on Irish History*, sect. 21.

§ *Ogygia*, part. iii. ch. 16. O'Flaherty has here reduced, it will be observed, the calculation of the Bards, and computes the dates of his landing to have been only a thousand years before our era; while Keating adheres to the authority of the Psalter of Cashel, in fixing it three centuries earlier. The author of *Dissertations on the History of Ireland*, (as I shall henceforth designate Mr. O'Connor, of Belanagare, in order to distinguish him from his reverend descendant, the late librarian of Stowe,) at first adopted the calculation of O'Flaherty, but saw reason afterwards to abate near five centuries of that date (see *Ogyg. Vindic.*, preface; also, *Reflections on History of Ireland*, Collectan. No. 10;) and Dr. O'Connor is content to refer the coming of the Milesians to the year before Christ, 489. (*Rer. Hibern. Script. Prol.* ii. 45.) The most extravagant, however, of all the computations of this event is that made by Donald O'Neil, a king of Ulster, who, writing in the year 1317, to Pope John XXII., assures his holiness that the Milesian colony settled in Ireland about 9300 years before the Christian era. See Fordun, (*Scotichron.*,) to whom we must trust for the authenticity of this curious document. It is also quoted, but without reference to any authority, by Usher, *Eccles. Antiquitat.* c. 16. In endeavouring to fix the period of the Argonautic expedition, the learned author of *The Remains of Japhet* comes gravely to the conclusion that it must have been about the same number of years from the flood as the beginning of the reign of the Milesians; and adds, "so that if Jason did sail to Ireland, it must have been soon after the establishment of the Milesians in that kingdom."

‖ The fondness of the Irish for their old national traditions is shown in the names given to remarkable places throughout the country, most of which may be traced to some famous hero or heroine, commemorated in ancient songs and tales. Even the shore on which the antediluvian nymph Cesara was said to have been buried, used to be pointed out, in the days of Giraldus, with reverence. (*Topog. Dist.* 3. c. 1.) Memorials, in like manner, of the great battle between the Milesians and the Tuatha-de-Danaan were preserved for ages on the spot where that combat is said to have occurred. Not only of the chieftains, but of the ladies and druids who fell in the fight, the names were associated with the valleys and hills in that neighbourhood. An old poem on the Battle of Sliabh-Mis is referred to by Smith, (*History of Kerry*,) who adds, that "the monumental stones said, in the above poem, to have been erected over the graves of the noble warriors, are still remaining on Mount Cahircoaree, one of the Sliabhmis mountains in Kerry."

the Noachidæ, include both Britain and Ireland among those Isles of the Gentiles* which became, on the partition of the earth, the appanage of the descendants of Japhet. The derivation of a later settlement, the Nemedians, from some country near the Euxine Sea, coincides no less aptly with the general current of European tradition, according to which the regions in the neighbourhood of the Caucasian mountains are to be regarded as the main source of the population of the West.†

We have shown it to be probable, as well from foreign as from native tradition, that Ireland derived her primitive population from Spain. The language brought by these first settlers was that which was common then to all the Celts of Europe. Those Spanish colonies, therefore, placed by Ptolemy on the south and south-western coasts of Ireland, must have arrived there at some much later period, when the dialect of the Celtic, anciently spoken in Spain, had become corrupted by mixture with other tongues; as it is plainly from these later Spanish settlers must have flowed that infusion into the Irish language of a number of Basque or Cantabrian words, which induced the learned antiquary, Edward Lhuyd, to imagine a degree of affinity between these tongues.‡

In the direction of Spain, it is most likely, whatever of foreign commerce or intercourse the ancient Irish may have possessed, was, down to a comparatively recent period, maintained. The description given, indeed, by a poet of our own days, of the geographical position of Ireland, as standing "with her back turned to Europe, her face to the West," is far more applicable to the state of her political and commercial relations in those times of which we are speaking. Wholly withdrawn from the rest of Europe, her resort lay along the shores of the Atlantic alone; and that commerce which frequented her ports in the first century of our era, was maintained, not certainly with the Romans, to whom she was then and for ages after unknown, but with Iberian merchants most probably, and with those descendants of the ancient Phœnician settlers who inhabited the western coasts of Spain.

A remark above applied to the Spanish colonization, will be found applicable also to the colonies from Gaul. Whatever share may have been contributed by that country to the first Celtic population of Ireland, it was not till a much later period, most probably, that the Gaulish colonies, named by Ptolemy, established themselves in the island. The people called Fir-Bolgs by the Bards were, it is evident, Belgæ, of the same race with those in Britain; but at what period they fixed themselves in either country, and whether those who took possession of Ireland were derived mediately through Britain, or direct from Belgic Gaul, are questions that must still remain open to conjecture. The Menapii and the Cauci, both nations of the Belgic coast,§ came directly, it is most probable, to Ireland, as there is no trace of them to be found in Britain,—the town of Menapia in Wales having been founded, it is thought, by the Irish Menapii.‖ In the Bardic historians we find a romantic account of a monarch, named Labhra Longseach, who having been exiled, in his youth, to Gaul, returned from thence at the head of a Gaulish colony,¶ which he established in the regions now known as the counties of Wicklow and Wexford. This site of the settlement corresponds exactly, as will be seen, with the district assigned by Ptolemy to the Menapii; and, in farther confirmation both of the tradition and of this geographer's accuracy, we find the old Irish name for the harbour which these foreigners first entered to have been Loch Garman, or the harbour of the Germans.

* "The first language spoken in Europe," says Parsons, "was the Japhetan, called afterwards the Pelasgian: and this language," he asserts, "is now to be found only in Ireland, the Highlands of Scotland and Wales." According to the Chronicle of the Celtic Kings, Japhet was the first British monarch. See Sammes, ch. 10.

† See Sir William Jones's Sixth Discourse, *On the Persians*.

‡ "As, by collating the languages, I have found one part of the Irish reconcileable to the Welsh; so, by a diligent perusal of the New Testament, and some manuscript papers I received from the learned Dr. Edward Brown, written in the language of the Cantabrians, I have had a satisfactory knowledge as to the affinity of the other part with the old Spanish."—*Preface to Lhuyd's Glossography*. The attempt to prove this alleged affinity is admitted to have been an utter failure: the instances of resemblance between the two languages being no greater than may be satisfactorily accounted for by such engraftments on the original speech of a country as foreign colonies are always sure to introduce. See Baxter, on the word *Ibernia*, where he has allowed himself to be misled by this false notion of Lhuyd into some very erroneous speculations.

§ "Both these nations," says the Monk Richard, "were undoubtedly of Teutonic origin, but it is not known at what period their ancestors passed over." Whitaker, however, who will allow no fact to stand in the way of his own hypothesis, with respect to the peopling of Ireland exclusively from Britain, deserts his favourite guide, Richard, on this point, and insists that the Menapii and the Cauci were not German, but British tribes. (Hist. of Manchester, book i. ch. 12. sect. 4.) Camden, Dr. O'Connor, Wood, (*Inquiry into the Primitive Inhabitants of Ireland*,) and other authorities, all pronounce these tribes to have been of German origin; as were, most probably, the neighbours of the Menapii, the Coriondi.

‖ "They must have come from Belgic Gaul and Germany, for we meet with no trace of them in Britain; Menapia, in Wales, being founded by the Irish Menapii."—Ledwich, *Antiquities*.

¶ From the long spears, called Laighean, with which the Gauls who accompanied this prince were armed, the province of Leinster is said to have derived its ancient name of Coige-Laighean, or the province of the Spears. See O'Halloran, vol. ii. ch. 6.

In that maze of uncertainty and confusion which, notwithstanding all that has been written upon the subject, continues to perplex the inquiries of the learned into the lineage of the different races of Europe, it remains still a contested question, whether the Belgæ were a Celtic or a Teutonic race.* In England, whose early history is so much involved in the decision, not merely as regards the origin and composition of her people, but also in all that relates to the formation of her language and the gradual rise of her institutions, the opinions hitherto advanced on the subject have been pretty equally balanced; and while, on the one side, Whitaker, Chalmers, and others, re-enforced recently by the able concurrence of Dr. Pritchard,† have held the Belgæ to be of Celtic origin, several distinguished writers, on the other hand, among whom is the author of the learned Inquiry into the Rise of the English Commonwealth,‡ have, as it appears to me, on far more tenable grounds, both of reasoning and authority, pronounced this people to have been of purely Teutonic descent. With respect to Ireland, the term Scythic, applied to the Belgic colony, leads to the inference that they were there held to be a northern or Gothic race; and that their language must have been different from that of the Celtic natives, appears from the notice taken in the Book of Lecane,§ of a particular form of speech known by the name of the Belgaid.

The Tuatha-de-Danaans, by whom the Belgæ were, as we have seen, defeated and supplanted, are thought by some to have been a branch of the Damnonians of Cornwall; while others, more consistently with tradition, derive their origin from those Damnii of North Britain, who inhabited the districts in the neighbourhood of the river Dee and the Frith of Clyde.‖ Of the historical verity of these two colonies, the Fir-Bolgs and Danaans, no doubt can be entertained; as down to a period within the fair compass of history, the former were still a powerful people in Connaught, having, on more than one important occasion, distinguished themselves in the intestine commotions of the country; and the famous Goll, the son of Morni, one of the heroes of the Ossianic age, was said to be of the blood-royal of the Tuatha-de-Danaan princes.¶

Among the tribes marked by Ptolemy in his map, a few suggest themselves as requiring particular notice. It was, as might be expected, in the south and south-western parts of Ireland, the region nearest to the coasts of Spain, that the tribes originating in that country were to be found. Thus the Iverni, whose chief city, according to Ptolemy, was Ivernis, or Hybernis, occupied, in addition to a portion of Cork, all that part of Kerry which lies between the Promontorium Austrinum, or Mizen Head, and the river, anciently called the Iernus, now the river Kenmare. We can have little doubt as to the source from whence the Iernus derived its name, when we find, on the north-west coast of Spain, another river Ierne, and also a promontory in its immediate neighbourhood,

* The cause of this confusion, which has arisen principally from the intermixture of the Germans and Gauls, by reciprocal colonisation, is well stated by a writer in the Mémoires de l'Academie, tom. xviii. "Il est sur que les Celtes et les Germains, étoient deux nations différentes, ... mais les colonies qui avoient passé du midi, ou de la Gaule, dans la Germanie, et celles qui étoient descendus de la Germanie dans la Gaule, les avoient extrêmement mêlées, et je ne doute pas qu'il ne fallût une certaine attention pour démêler les différences qui les distinguoient." Pinkerton, also, has given an explanation, perhaps still more satisfactory, of the origin of this confusion between the races.—"As the Celts had anciently possessed all Gaul, their name was continued by some, and by the distant Greek writers especially, to all the Gauls: though the Belgæ and Aquitani, the Galli Braccati, and others, or the far greater part of the Gauls, were not Celts, but the expellers of the Celts. The case is the same as that of the English, who are called Britons, not as being old Britons, but as expellers of those Britons, and as living in Britain."—*Dissertation on the Scythians or Goths*, part ii. ch. 4.

† *Researches into the Physical History of Mankind.* One of the reasons alleged by this writer, for supposing the Belgic to have been akin to the Erse, is, that "several names of persons and places in those parts of South Britain which were probably occupied by Belgic people, belong, according to their orthography, to the Erse, and not to the Cambro-Celtic dialect." But the real solution of the difficulty here stated is to be found in the fact demonstrated by Lhuyd and others, that the primitive possessors of the country now called Wales were a race speaking a dialect of the Erse, or Irish, and that from them, not from the Belgæ, the permanent features of the country derived their names.

‡ "The main body of the population of England is derived from the Belgic nation, one of the three great families into which the Teutones are divided."—*Sir F. Palgrave's Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, vol. i. ch. 2. See, also, for curious remarks upon the affinity between the Frisic and Anglo-Saxon languages (the former being, it is there said, the least altered branch of the Belgic,) Ed. Rev. vol iii. art. 1.—Nor must the acute, though dogmatic, Pinkerton, be forgotten among the supporters of the Gothic origin of the Belgæ. See *Dissert. on the Goths*, part ii. ch. 3., where, in addition to his own opinion and authority, he adds the following in a note:—"Paul Merula, in his Cosmographia, seems to be the first who saw that the ancient Belgæ, on account of their German origin, spoke the Gothic tongue; and his reasons to prove it (pars i. lib. 3.) cannot be answered."

§ As quoted by Wood (*Inquiry into the Primitive Inhabitants, &c.*)—This writer, who follows Pinkerton in supposing the Belgæ to have been the Scots, adopts also, of course, his opinion as to the former being Teutones. "The only inhabitants of Ireland (he says) who seem to have attracted the notice of British, Roman, and other foreign writers, were the enterprising Belgæ, whom, as Goths or Scythians, they denominated Scoti or Scuit."

‖ "From hence, perhaps, they borrowed the name of Tuath Dee; that is, a people living contiguous to the river Dee."—*Ozyg.*, part i.

¶ See Translation of an Ode, attributed to Goll, by O'Halloran, Transactions of Royal Irish Academy for the year 1788.

bearing the same name. The term thus applied signifies, in Celtic, *the uttermost point;* and in its appropriation thus successively to each of these places, we trace, by stages, as it were, the progress of Phœnician discovery in the west; the same name, which they who first reached the western coasts of Spain left as a mark of the uttermost bounds of their knowledge in that direction, having been afterwards, on the discovery of Ireland, transferred, in the same sense, to her shores.*

The Velabri, a people situated near Kerry Head, were also, it is supposed, of Spanish origin; while the Gangani (more properly Concani) and the Luceni,† tribes inhabiting near each other in Spain, continued also, after migration, to be near neighbours in Ireland; the Luceni having established themselves on the eastern side of the Shannon, while the Concani, from whom Connaught is said to have been named, fixed their station upon the western. The claims of Brigantes to be accounted a Spanish colony, appear by no means so valid; though from the share assigned to this people in the romantic adventures of the Milesians, it becomes a point of importance with the believers in that story to establish their direct descent from Spain. According to the Bards, it was by Breoghan, the great ancestor of the Milesians, that their city Brigantia, near the site of the present Corunna, was built; and it was from the top, as they tell us, of a lofty light-house, or Pharos, erected on the Gallician coast, that Ith, the son of Breoghan, looking northward, one starry winter night, discovered, by means of a miraculous telescope, the Isle of Erin to which they were destined. It is added, that the descendants of these Spanish heroes were, to a late period, distinguished by the title of the Clan Breogan,‡ and that to them the name of Brigantes was applied by Ptolemy in his map. All this, however, plausibly as it may seem to be supported by the existence of an actual city named Brigantia,§ in Gallicia,—the very region from whence most of the Spanish colonies were derived,—is but a creation evidently of the later national historians, founded upon the true and ancient traditions of a colonization from the north-west of Spain.

The most probable account of the Brigantes is, that they were a branch of that powerful tribe of the same name in Britain, whose territories extended over no less than five of the present English counties, and who became the most potent and numerous people of all the ancient Britons.‖ On the strength of a mere conjecture, suggested by Camden,¶ the date of their migration into Ireland is fixed so late as the year of our era 76, when Petilius Cerealis was Governor of Britain. But for this assumption there appears to be no historical authority whatsoever. The mention, indeed, of the Brigantes in Ptolemy's map of Ireland, where, as we have seen, only the more ancient of her tribes are marked down, sufficiently disproves the recent date thus assigned to their migration.

The Nagnatæ, a people inhabiting Connaught, and supposed to have contributed to

* "The reason which concludes me in the belief that Ireland took its name from the Phœnicians, is because in the uttermost coast of Spain, westward, is a promontory, called by Strabo, Ierne, and the river next to it is called by Mela, Ierne; but when these islands were discovered, then Ireland took this name as the uttermost."—*Sammes, Britann. Antiq. Illust.* chap. 5. Though by Camden and several other writers, the authority of Strabo is, in like manner, referred to, for the existence of a Spanish promontory, called Ierne, there is, in reality, no such headland mentioned by that geographer. According to Hoffman, it was a mountain that was thus named (*Lexic. in voce;*) and he also refers to Strabo, but, as far as I can find, with no better authority.

Similar to Sammes's derivation of the name Ierne, is that of Hibernia, as given by Bochart, who says that it signifies the last or most western dwelling-place. "Nihil aliud est quam *Iberniæ* ultima habitatio; quia ultra Hiberniam versus occasum veteres nihil noverant quam vastum mare."—*Geograph. Sac.* lib. xii. c. 39.

† "The Luceni of Ireland seem to derive their name and original from the Lucensii of Gallitia, in the opposite coast of Spain, of whose names some remains are to this day in the barony of Lixnaw."—*Camden.*

‡ *Dissertations on the History of Ireland*, chap. 13.

§ On no other grounds did Florianus del Campo, an author mentioned by Camden, undertake to prove that the Brigantes of Britain were derived, through Ireland, from his own country, Spain. There is also an Essay, by Mons. le Brigant (published 1762,) in which he professes to prove that they "were the most ancient inhabitants of Spain, France, Germany, Portugal, England, and of Ireland in part." Baxter had already given much the same account of them, deriving them originally from the ancient Phrygians. Availing himself, too, of a whimsical reading of Scaliger, who, in a passage of Seneca, converts "Scuto Brigantes" into "Scoto-Brigantes," Baxter applies this latter name, throughout his work, to the Scots who colonized North Britain, choosing to consider them as a mixed race between the Brigantes of Britain, and the Irish.—*Glossar. Antiq.* passim.

‖ *Brigantium civitatem, quæ numerosissima provinciæ totius perhibetur.—Tacit. Agric.* c. 17.

¶ "If it may not be allowed that our Brigantes and those in Ireland had the same names, upon the same account, I had rather, with my learned friend, Mr. Thomas Savil, conjecture that some of our Brigantes, with others of the British nations, retired into Ireland upon the coming over of the Romans—some for the sake of ease and quietness, others," &c. &c. On this point, Whitaker and his follower, Wood, are, as usual, satisfied with the authority of the Monk Richard, whose words bear most suspiciously, I must say, the appearance of having been copied from the above passage of Camden:—"Nationes quæ cum vel ab hoste finitimo non daretur quies vel, &c. &c. in hanc terram trajecerunt." There are, indeed, strong grounds for suspecting that this pretended work of the Monk of Cirencester, upon which Whitaker, Chalmers, Wood, and others, have founded so many speculations, was but a clever forgery of the last century, fabricated, it is probable, for the express purpose of imposing upon the learned but credulous Dr. Stukely, to whom the manuscript of it was so suspiciously transmitted.

the compound name of that province,* deserve to be peculiarly noticed on account of their chief city, Nagnata, to which Ptolemy applies the epithet "eminent," or "illustrious,"† and which is conjectured to have stood not far from the present Sligo.‡ We find, also, among the towns enumerated by this geographer, Eblana, or Deblana,§ a city belonging to the tribe called the Eblanii, and placed by Ptolemy under the same parallel with the present Dublin.

Having touched briefly on all that appeared to me most worthy of observation among the earlier tribes and septs of Ireland, I shall now proceed to the consideration of that latest and most important of all her settlements, the Scythic, or Scotic, from whence the whole of her people in the course of time received the name of Scots, and retained it exclusively to so late a period as the tenth century of our era.‖ A sketch of the history of this colony, as contained in the Psalters and metrical records of the Bards, has been already given in the preceding chapter, and may be found at large in the work of Keating, which is drawn almost wholly from these romantic sources.

It is a task ungracious and painful, more especially to one accustomed from his early days to regard, through a poetic medium, the ancient fortunes of his country, to be obliged, at the stern call of historical truth, not only to surrender his own illusions on the subject, but to undertake also the invidious task of dispelling the dreams of others who have not the same imperative motives of duty or responsibility for disenchanting themselves of so agreeable an error. That the popular belief in this national tale should so long have been cherished and persevered in, can hardly be a subject of much wonder. So consolatory to the pride of a people for ever struggling against the fatality of their position has been the fondly imagined epoch of those old Milesian days, when, as they believe, the glory of art and arms, and all the blessings of civilization came in the train of their heroic ancestors from the coasts of Spain, that hitherto none but the habitual revilers and depreciators of Ireland, the base scribes of a dominant party and sect, have ever thought of calling in question the authenticity of a legend to which a whole nation had long clung with retrospective pride, and which substituting, as it does, a mere phantom of glory for true historical fame, has served them so mournfully in place of real independence and greatness. Even in our own times, all the most intelligent of those writers who have treated of ancient Ireland, have each, in turn, adopted the tale of the Milesian colonization, and lent all the aid of their learning and talent to elevate it into history.¶ But, even in their hands, the attempt has proved an utter failure; nor could any effort, indeed, of ingenuity succeed in reconciling the improbabilities of a story, which in no other point of view differs from the fictitious origins invented for their respective countries by Hunibald, Suffridus,** Geoffrey Monmouth, and others, than in having been somewhat more ingeniously put together by its inventors, and far more fondly persevered in by the imaginative people, whose love of high ancestry it flatters, and whose wounded pride it consoles.

In one respect, the traditional groundwork on which the fable is founded, may be accounted of some value to the historian, as proving the prevalence in the country itself of early traditions and remembrances respecting that connexion with the coasts of Spain and the East, which, as well from Punic as from Grecian authorities, we have shown that the Ierne of other ages must have maintained.

Had the Bards, in their account of the early settlements, so far followed the natural course of events as to place that colony which they wished to have considered as the

* Compounded, possibly, says Camden, of Concani and Nagnatæ.

† Πολις ϵπισημος.

‡ "I cannot discover," says Ware, "the least footsteps of a city so called, in all that tract of country—so all-devouring is Time!"—Chap. 6.

§ Ita enim planè reponendum in Ptolemæo pro truncato Eblana.—*Baxter, Gloss. Antiq. Britan.*

‖ Quod ut ante undecimum post Christi navitatem seculum haud quaquàm factum, in fine præcedentis Capitis declaravimus; ita neminem qui toto antecedentium annorum spatio scripserit, produci posse arbitramur qui *Scotiæ* appellatione Albaniam unquam designaverit.—*Usher, De Britannic. Eccles. Primord.* cap. 16.

¶ Lord Rosse, (*Observations on the Bequest of Henry Flood.*) Dr. O'Connor, (*Rerum Hibernicarum Scriptores Veteres.*) and Mr. D'Alton, the able and well-informed author of the *Essay on Ancient Ireland*, are among the distinguished writers here alluded to as having graced, if not invigorated, this view of the question by their advocacy. To these has lately been added Sir William Betham, who, in his ingenious work, entitled "The Gael and the Cymbri," has shaped his hypothesis to the same popular belief.

** A fabricator of fictitious origins for the Frisons, as Hunibald was an inventor in the same line for the Franks; the latter founding his fictions professedly upon Druidical remains. According to Suffridus, the Frisons were in possession of an uninterrupted series of annals from the year 313 before Christ. "Itaque cum ab anno 313 ante natum Christum exordium sumant."—*Dé Orig. Fris.* See the Essay of M. du Rondeau, *Mém. de l'Acad. de Bruxelles*, art. 2d, 1773.

There is scarcely a nation, indeed, in Europe which has not been provided thus with some false scheme of antiquity; and it is a fact, mournfully significant, that the Irish are now the only people among whom such visionary pretensions are still clung to with any trust.

original of the Irish people at the commencement instead of at the end of the series, we should have been spared, at least, those difficulties of chronology which at present beset the whole scheme. By making the Milesian settlement posterior in time to the Fir-Bolgs and the Tuatha-de-Danaans, both the poetry and the reality of our early annals are alike disturbed from their true stations. The ideal colony, which ought to have been placed beyond the bounds of authentic record, where its inventors would have had free scope for their flights, has, on the contrary, been introduced among known personages and events, and compelled to adjust itself to the unpliant neighbourhood of facts; while, on the other hand, the authentic Belgæ and Damnii, accredited beings of history, have, by the interposition of this shadowy intruder, been separated, as it were, from the real world, and removed into distant regions of time, where sober chronology would in vain attempt to reach them.*

It is true, the more moderate of the Milesian believers, on being made aware of these chronological difficulties, have surrendered the remote date at first assigned to the event, and, in general, content themselves with fixing it near 1000 years later. But this remove, besides that it exposes the shifting foundation on which the whole history rests, serves but to render its gross anachronisms and improbabilities still more glaring. A scheme of descent which traces the ancestors of the Irish, through a direct series of generations, not merely to the first founders of Phœnician arts and enterprise, but even to chieftains connected by friendship with the prophet Moses himself,† had need of a remote station in time to lend even a colouring of probability to such pretensions. When brought near the daylight of modern history, and at the distance of nearly a thousand years from their pretended progenitors, it is plain these Milesian heroes at once shrink into mere shadows of fable; and, allowing them their fullest scope of antiquity, there appear no grounds for believing that the Scotic colony settled in Ireland at a remoter period than about two centuries before our era. That they succeeded the Fir-Bolgs and Danaans in their occupation of the country, all its records and traditions agree; and the first arrival of the Belgic tribes in Ireland from the coasts of Britain, or even direct from Gaul, could hardly have been earlier than about the third or fourth century before Christ.

Another strong proof of the comparatively recent date of the Scotic colony, is the want of all trace of its existence in Ptolemy's map of Ireland,‡ where the entire omission of even the name of the Scoti among the tribes of that island, shows that, not merely to the Tyrian geographers, who chiefly drew up that map, was this designation of her people wholly unknown; but that so late as the beginning of the second century, it had not yet reached the knowledge of Ptolemy himself. For this latter fact the state of seclusion in which Ireland had so long remained,—shut out, as she was, entirely from the circle of the Roman Empire,—may be thought sufficiently, perhaps, to account; as well as for the equally certain fact, that not till towards the end of the third century does there occur a single instance, in any writer, of the use of the term Scotia for Ireland, or Scoti for any of her people.

But the most remarkable and, as it appears to me, decisive proof of the recent date of the Scotic settlement, still remains to be mentioned. We learn from the Confession of St. Patrick, a writing of acknowledged genuineness, that, so late as the life-time of that Saint, about the middle of the fifth century, the name of Scots had not yet extended to the whole of the Irish nation, but was still the distinctive appellation of only a particular portion of it.§ It is, indeed, evident that those persons to whom St. Patrick applies the

* According to the calculation of the Bards, the arrival of the Belgæ must have been at least 1500 years before the Christian era.

† Among the memorable things related of Moses during his intercourse with the ancestors of the Irish, we are told of a prediction uttered by him to their chief Gadelius, that "wheresoever his posterity should remain or inhabit, serpents should have no power in that land to hurt either man or beast. And this prophecy is verified by Candia and Ireland; for in neither of those islands, as being inhabited by the Gadelians, it is manifest that serpents had any power as they have in any other countries."—M'Curtin's *Vindication of the Antiquity of Ireland*, copied chiefly from Keating.

‡ This fact is noticed by the geographer Cellarius, and the same conclusion deduced from it. After reviewing the other tribes of Ireland, he says: "Hos populos Ptolemæus in Hibernia prodidit: nullos autem in illis recensuit Scotos quod ideo posteriores, saltem nomen illorum, oportet in hac insula fuisse."—L. ii. c. 4.

§ Unde autem Hiberione, qui nunquam notitiam Dei habuerunt, nisi idola et immunda usque nunc semper coluerunt, quomodo nuper facta est plebs Domini et filii Dei nuncupantur? Filii Scottorum et filiæ Regulorum monachi et virgines Christi esse videntur. Et etiam una benedicta Scotta, genitiva nobilis, pulcherrima, adulta erat, quam ego baptizavi.—*S. Patricii Confessio.*

This strong proof of the comparatively modern date of the Scotic settlement has not escaped the notice of unprejudiced inquirers into our antiquities. The Bollandists, Tillemont, Father Innes, and, lately, the learned historian of the Irish church, Dr. Lanigan, have all perceived and remarked upon the passage; the two latter showing how fatal to the dreams of Milesian antiquity must be considered the state of things disclosed in this authentic document. The nature and object of the valuable work of Dr. Lanigan were such as to lead him only to the consideration of our ecclesiastical antiquities; but the few remarks made by him upon the passage of St. Patrick's Confession, just cited, leave no doubt as to the view taken by his clear and manly intellect of that whole apparatus of pompous fable, to which so many of the antiquaries of this country still

name of Scots, were all of the high and dominant class; whereas, in speaking of the great bulk of the people, he calls them Hiberionaces,—from the name Hiberione, which is always applied by him to the Island itself. Such a state of things,—resembling that of the Franks in Gaul, when, although masters of the country, they had not yet imposed upon it their name,—shows clearly that the Scotic dynasty could not then have numbered many ages of duration; and that to date its commencement from about a century or two before the Christian era is to allow the fullest range of antiquity to which, with any semblance of probability, it can pretend.

Even when lightened thus of the machinery of fable, and of all its unfounded pretensions to antiquity, the Scotic settlement must still continue a subject of mystery and discussion from the state of darkness in which we are left as to its real race and origin; and in this the Scoti and the Picts have shared a common destiny. In considering the Scots to have been of Scythian extraction, all parties are agreed,—as well those who contend for a northern colonization as they who, following the Bardic history, derive their settlement, through Spain, from the East. For this latter view of the subject, there are some grounds, it must be admitted, not unplausible: the Celto-Scythæ, who formed a part of the mixed people of Spain, having come originally from the neighbourhood of the Euxine Sea,* and therefore combining in themselves all the peculiarities attributed to the Milesian colony of being at once Scythic, Oriental, and direct from Spain. Of the actual settlement of several Spanish tribes in Ireland, and in those very districts of the Irish coast facing Gallicia, we have seen there is no reason to doubt; and there would be, in so far, grounds for connecting them with the Scotic colonization, as in that very region, it appears, was situated the principal city of the Scoti, in whose name, Hybernis, may be found the mark of its Iberian origin. But however strongly these various facts and coincidences tend to accredit the old and constant tradition of a colonization from Spain, at some very remote period, and however adroitly they have been turned to account by some of the favourers of the Milesian romance, it is evident that, to the comparatively modern settlement of the Scots, they are, in no respect, applicable; the race to whom the southern region of Ireland owed its Iberi and Hybernis, the names of its river Ierne and of its Sacred Promontory, having existed ages before the time when the Scoti—a comparatively recent people, unknown to Maximus of Tyre, or even to Ptolemy himself,—found their way to these shores.

We have, therefore, to seek in some other direction the true origin of this people: and the first clue to our object is afforded by the Bardic historians themselves, who represent the Scoti to have been of Scythic descent, and to have from thence derived their distinctive appellation. By the term Scythia, as applied in the first centuries of Christianity, was understood Germany and the more northern regions of Europe;† and to confirm still farther the origin of the Scots from that quarter,‡ it is added by the Bards that they were of the same race with three colonies that had preceded them; namely, the Nemedians, the Tuatha-de-Danaans, and the Fir-Bolgs or Belgæ. Now, that these tribes, whether coming through the medium of Britain, or, as some think, direct from their own original countries, were all of German extraction, appears to be the prevailing opinion. One of the most enthusiastic, indeed of the Milesian believers is of opinion that the Nemedians, or Nemethæ, belonged to that German people, the Nemetes, who

lend their sanction. The result of his observations on the subject is, that "following the analogy usual in such cases, we may conclude that the invasion of Ireland by the Scots ought not to be referred to as high an antiquity as some of our historians have pretended; otherwise it would be very difficult to explain how they could have been in our Saint's time considered as a nation distinct from the greater part of the people of Ireland."—*Eccles. Hist. of Ireland*, vol. i. ch. 5. He adds afterwards, that "the Scots might have been 400 or 500 years in Ireland before the distinction of names between them and the other inhabitants totally ceased;" thus assigning even a later date for their arrival in the country than, it will be seen, I have allowed in the text.

* That the Scythæ of Europe came from the northern parts of Persia seems to be the opinion of most inquirers on the subject. Hence the near affinity which is found between the German and the Persian languages.

Among those authorities which have run the round of all the writers in favour of the Milesian story is that of Orosius, the historian, who is represented as stating, that "Scythians, expulsed from Gallicia in Spain by Constantine the Great, took shelter in Ireland."—See Dr. Campbell. (*Strictures on the Ecclesiastical and Literary History of Ireland*, sect. 5.) This authority, which Dr. Campbell has, in his turn, taken implicitly for granted, would, if genuine, be doubtless highly important. But there is, in reality, no such statement in Orosius, who merely mentions, in describing the position of Ireland, that a part of her coasts ranges opposite to the site of the Gallician city, Brigantia, in Spain.

† Thus Anastasius, the Sinaite, a monkish writer whom Pinkerton cites as of the ninth age, but who lived as early as the sixth:—"Σκυθίαν δὲ καθάπερ καλοῦσι οἱ παλαιοὶ τὸ κλίμα ἅπαν τὸ Βορειον, ἥτοι ὅσην οἱ Γοτθοι καὶ Δανοι."

‡ The genealogy of the Milesians, or Scoti, as given by Keating, lies all in the Sarmatian line; and no less personages than Petorbes, King of the Huns, and the great Attila himself, are mentioned as belonging to one of the collateral branches of their race.

inhabited the districts at present occupied by Worms, Spire, and Mentz.* By some the Danaans are conjectured to have been Danes; or, at least, from the country of the people afterwards known by that name;† and the Bardic historians, who describe this colony as speaking the German‡ language, mention Denmark and Norway as the last places from whence they migrated to the British Isles. Of the claims of the Belgæ to be considered a Teutonic people,§ I have already sufficiently spoken; and to them also, as well as to the other two colonies, the Scoti are alleged to have been akin both in origin and language.

Independently of all this testimony of the Bards, we have also the authentic evidence of Ptolemy's map,—showing how early, from the north of Belgium and the shores of the German Ocean, adventurous tribes had found their way to the Eastern Irish coasts. It has been asserted, rather dogmatically, by some Irish writers, that no descent from Denmark or Norway upon Ireland, no importation of Scandian blood into that island, can be admitted to have taken place before the end of the eighth century.‖ How far this assertion is founded, a more fitting opportunity will occur for considering, when I come to treat of the later Danish invasions. It may at present suffice to remark, that traces of intercourse with the nations of the Baltic, as well friendly¶ as hostile,** are to be found, not only in the Irish annals for some centuries before St. Patrick, but also in the poems, chronicles, and histories of those northern nations themselves. Combining these circumstances with all that is known concerning the migratory incursions to which, a few centuries before our era, so many of the countries of Europe were subject from the tribes inhabiting the coasts of the Baltic and Germanic seas, it appears highly probable that the Scoti were a branch of the same Scythic swarm; and that, having gained a settlement in Ireland, they succeeded in bringing under their dominion both the old Hiberionaces—as St. Patrick styles the original population—and those other foreign colonies, by whom, in succession, the primitive inhabitants had been conquered.

Among the various other hypotheses devised by different writers to account for the origin of the Scots, and the very important part played by them in Ireland, there is not one that explains, even plausibly, the peculiar circumstances that mark the course of their history. According to Richard, the Monk of Westminster, and his ready copyist, Whitaker, the Irish Scots were no other than those ancient Britons, who, taking flight on the first invasion of their country by the Belgæ, about 350 years before the Christian era, passed over into the neighbouring island of Ireland, and there, being joined, after an

* *Dissertations on the History of Ireland*, sect. 13.

† Stillingfleet, *Origin. Britann.* Preface.—Ledwich, *Antiquities, Colonization of Ireland.*—O'Brien, Preface to Irish Dictionary.—O'Flaherty remarks, "I shall not aver that Danaan has been borrowed from the name of Danes, as the Danes have not been known to the Latins by that name until the establishment of Christianity, though they might have gone under the appellation earlier; in the same manner as the names of Scots and Picts were in use before they came to the knowledge of the Romans."—*Ogyg.* part 1. The name of Danes was not known till the sixth century, when it is first mentioned by the historians Jornandes and Procopius.

‡ "Our historians have described, in an eloquent and pompous style, the different and various peregrinations of the Danaans, informing us that they resided, as has already been mentioned, in the northern parts of Germany, to wit, in the cities of Falia, Goria, Finnia, and Muria, and spoke the German language."—*Ogygia.*

With that spirit of unfairness which but too much pervades his writings, Dr. Ledwich refers to this passage as containing O'Flaherty's own opinions upon the subject:—"O'Flaherty *allows*," he says, "that they spoke the German or Teutonic, and inhabited the cities Falia, Goria, &c. in the north of Germany."

§ The same division of opinion which prevails in England on this question exists also among the modern Belgians themselves, as may be seen by reference to different articles in the Mémoires de l'Académie de Bruxelles. See, for instance, *Mémoire sur la Religion des Peuples de l'ancienne Belgique*, par M. des Roches, (de l'anné 1773,) throughout the whole of which the learned author takes for granted the Teutonic lineage of the Belgæ, treats of them as a wholly distinct race from the Gauls, and applies to the ancestors of his countrymen all that Tacitus has said of the Germans. In speaking of the days of the week, as having been named after some of the northern gods, M. des Roches says:—"Ces jours sont aisés à reconnoitre par les noms, qui les désignent en Flamand; sur-tout si on les compare à la langue Anglo-Saxone, sœur de la nôtre, et aux autres langues septentrionales." On the other hand, in a prize essay of M. du Jardin, 1773, we find the following passage:—"Priusquam in Gallias Romani transiissent, Belgæ omnes, ut qui origine Celtæ, Celtice loquebantur."

‖ Dr. O'Connor, Wood, &c.

¶ See the Annals of Tigernach, A. D. 79, where he notices the grief of the monarch Lugad for the death of his queen, who was the daughter of the King of Lochland, or Denmark. Alliances of the same nature recur in the second century, when we find the monarch Tuathal and his son Feidlim both married to the daughters of Finland kings. "By these marriages," says the author of the Dissertations on Irish History, "we see what close intercourse the Scots held, in the second century, with the nations bordering on the Baltic."—Sect. 5.

In translating the above record of Tigernach, the Rev. Dr. O'Connor has rather suspiciously substituted King of the *Saxons* for King of the Danes.

** It appears from Saxo Grammaticus (Hist. Dan. lib. 8.) that already, in the fourth century, some Danish chieftains, whom he names, had been engaged in piratical incursions upon the Irish coasts. Here again Doctor O'Connor has substituted Saxons for Danes; and it is difficult not to agree with Mr. D'Alton, who has pointed out these rather unworthy misquotations, (Essay, Period 1. sect. 1.) that they were designed to "favour the reverend doctor's system of there being no Danes in Ireland previous to the ninth century."

interval of 250 years, by a second body of fugitive Britons,* took the name of Scuites, or Scots, meaning the Wanderers, or Refugees. This crude and vague conjecture, enlisted by Whitaker in aid of his favourite object of proving Ireland to have drawn its population exclusively from Britain, has no one feature either of authority or probability to recommend it. By Pinkerton, Wood, and others, it is held that the Belgæ were the warlike race denominated Scots by the Irish; but the whole course of our early history runs counter to this conjecture,—the Belgæ and Scoti, though joining occasionally as allies in the field, being represented, throughout, as distinct races. Even down to modern times, there are mentioned instances of families, in Galway and Sligo, claiming descent from the Belgic race, as wholly distinct from the Milesian or Scotic.†

It cannot but be regarded as a remarkable result, that while, as the evidence adduced strongly testifies, so many of the foreign tribes that in turn possessed this island were Gothic, the great bulk of the nation itself, its language, character, and institutions, should have remained so free from charge,‡ that even the conquering tribes themselves should, one after another, have become mingled with the general mass, leaving only in those few Teutonic words, which are found mixed up with the native Celtic, any vestige of their once separate existence.

The fact evidently is, that long before the period when these Scythic invaders first began to arrive, there had already poured from the shores of the Atlantic into the country, an abundant Celtic population, which, though not too ready, from the want of concert and coalition, which has ever characterized that race, to fall a weak and easy prey to successive bands of adventurers, was yet too numerous, as well as too deeply imbued with another strong Celtic characteristic, attachment to old habits and prejudices, to allow even conquerors to innovate materially either on their own language or their usages. From this unchangeableness of the national character it has arisen, that in the history of no other country in Europe do periods far apart, and separated even by ages, act as mirrors to each other so vividly and faithfully. At a comparatively recent era of her annals, when brought unresistingly under the dominion of the English, her relations to her handful of foreign rulers were again nearly the same, and again the result alike to victors and to vanquished was for a long period such as I have above described.

It has been already observed that, in the obscurity which envelops their name and origin, the destiny of the Scots resembles closely that of another people not less remarkable in the history of the British Isles, known by the name of the Picts; and as, according to the Irish traditions, the Scots and Picts made their appearance in these western regions about the same period, the history of the latter of the two colonies may help to throw some light on that of its Scotic neighbours. With the account given by the Bardic historians of the Picts sailing in quest of a settlement in these seas, and resting for a time in the south of Ireland on their way, the statement of Bede on the subject substantially agrees;§ and while the Bards represent this people as coming originally from Thrace, the venerable historian expressly denominates them a Sythic people. It would, therefore, appear, that the Scots and the Picts were both of northern race,

* "It was then," Whitaker says, "they first incorporated themselves into one society." The details of this notable scheme, which supposes so large and important a body of people to have waited 250 years to be incorporated and named, are to be found in the History of Manchester, book i. chap. 12. sec. 4.

† "Lastly, they (the Belgians) settled in Moy-Sachnoly, at this day Hymania, in the county of Galway, after the arrival of St. Patrick, and there O'Layn, and, in the county Sligo, O'Beunachan, to our times the proprietor of a very handsome estate, look on themselves as their real descendants."—*Ogygia*, part iii. chap. 12.

‡ "In the Irish tongue," says O'Brien, "the Celtic predominates over all other mixtures, not only of the old Spanish, but also of the Scandinavian and other Scytho-German dialects, though Ireland anciently received three or four different colonies, or rather swarms of adventurers, from those quarters." (*Preface to Dictionary*) One of the causes he assigns for the slight effect produced upon the language by such infusions is, that "these foreign adventurers and sea-rovers were under the necessity of begging wives from the natives, and the necessary consequence of this mixture and alliance was that they, or at least their children, lost their own original language, and spoke no other than that of the nation they mixed with;—which was exactly the case with the first English settlers in Ireland, who soon became mere Irishmen both in their language and manners."

§ "It happened that the nation of the Picts coming into the ocean from Scythia, as is reported, in a few long ships, the winds driving them about beyond all the borders of Britain, arrived in Ireland, and put into the northern coasts thereof, and finding the nation of the Scots there, requested to be allowed to settle among them, but could not obtain it."—*Ecclesiast. Hist.* book i. chap. 1. In Bede's account of the region from whence they came, the Saxon Chronicle, Geoffrey Monmouth, and all the ancient English historians concur. The following passage also of Tacitus tells strongly in favour of the same opinion: "Rutilæ Caledoniam habitantiu meomæ, magni artus, Germanicam originem asseverant."—*Agric.* cap. 11. Attempts have been made to get rid of the weight of this authority by a most unfair interpretation of a passage which follows in the same chapter, and which applies evidently only to those inhabitants of Britain, who lived in the neighbourhood of the Gauls—"proximi Gallis." In speaking of this portion of the British population, the historian says, "In universum tamen æstimanti, Gallos vicinum solum occupasse credibile." To suppose that by the expletive phrase "in universum," so deliberate a writer as Tacitus could have meant to retract or overturn an opinion expressed so decidedly but a few lines before, is a stretch of interpretation, upon which only the sturdy spirit of system could have ventured.

and, most probably, both from the same hive of hardy adventurers who were then pouring forth their predatory swarms over Europe.

That the Picts were the original inhabitants of North Britain, and the same people with the Caledonians, seems now universally admitted; and among the various opinions held as to their origin, the conjecture of Camden that they were but Britons under another name,—some indigenous to that region, others driven thither by the terror of the Roman arms,—has been hitherto the opinion most generally received. It is to be recollected, however, that Camden, in pronouncing the Picts to have been Britons, took for granted that the ancient Britons were the same people with the Welsh,—thereby confounding two races which, there is every reason to believe, were wholly distinct. The extraction claimed by the Welsh themselves, and, as it appears, on no insufficient grounds, from those ancient Cimbri, whose martial virtue the pen of Tacitus has immortalized, at once distinguishes their race from that of the first inhabitants of Britain, who were, it is generally allowed, pure Celts or Gael; while the Cimbri, who lent their name to that northern Chersonesus, from whence the Teutonic tribes inundated Europe, were themselves no less decidedly Teutons.*

With respect to the languages of the two races, the radical differences† between the Gaelic and the Cumraig have been, by more than one intelligent Welshman, admitted and demonstrated; while no less eminent Irish philologers have arrived at exactly the same conclusion. The words common to the two languages appear to be sufficiently accounted for by the close intercourse with each other, which, in different countries of Europe, the Celtic and Cimbric races are known to have maintained.

For another fact illustrative of the true history of the Cymry, we are indebted also to a learned Welsh antiquary, who has shown by the evidence of those undying memorials, the names of rivers, headlands, and mountains, that another race had preceded the Welsh in the possession of that country,—the words wedded, from time immemorial, to her hills and waters, being all Gaelic or Irish.‡ The original seat, therefore, of the Cymry in Britain, must be sought for, it is clear, elsewhere; and if there be any region where similar traces of ancient inhabitancy are found, where the rivers and hills, the harbours and promontories, are all invested with Welsh names, we may there fix, without hesitation, the site of their primitive abode. This region, the mountain territory of the ancient Picts supplies.§ In the parts of North Britain once inhabited by that mysterious people, the language of the Cymry is still alive in the names of those permanent features of nature which alone defy oblivion, and tell the story of the first dwellers to all the races that succeed them.

Taking these and some other circumstances that shall presently be mentioned, into consideration, it is hardly possible, I think, to resist the conclusion that the people called Picts were the progenitors of the present Welsh,—being themselves a branch of that Cimbric stock from whence all the traditions of the latter people represent them

* See Dissertation prefixed by Wharton to his History of Poetry, where he pronounces the Cimbri to have been a Scandinavian tribe.

† The first person who ventured to question the supposed affinity between the Gaelic and Cambrian languages was Dr. Percy, the Bishop of Dromore, in his Preface to Mallet's Northern Antiquities. "To confess my own opinion," he says, "I cannot think they are equally derived from one common Celtic stock." The same writer ventured also to intimate the true reason of the wide difference between these languages. "That the Cimbri of Marius was not a Celtic but German or Gothic people, is an opinion that may be supported with no slight argument." A learned Welshman, the Rev. Mr. Roberts, thus decisively follows up and confirms the bishop's views. "Since the languages of the Cymry and Gael are perfectly distinct, they must be distinct nations; and if the distinction had been cautiously attended to, much confusion, both in history and etymology, would have been avoided." The same writer adds, "Had Mr. Whitaker known either the Welsh or Gaelic language well, I am persuaded he would have been very far from supposing that the Cymry and Gael were the same people, for he would have found that either of their languages is of no more use to the understanding of the other, than the mere knowledge of the Latin to the understanding of the Greek." While such is the view taken by a learned Welshman respecting the relationship between the two languages, a no less learned Irish scholar thus expresses himself on the subject: —"The Gomeraeg spoken at this day in North Wales, and the Gaelic spoken in Ireland, are as different in their syntactic constructions as any two tongues can be." (*O'Connor, Dissert. on Hist. of Scotland.*) Sir W. Betham asserts still more decidedly the radical difference between the two languages, adopting the same views respecting the origin of the Welsh people, which I have above endeavoured to enforce. See his *Gael and the Cimbri* for some curious illustrations of this point.

‡ Lhuyd, Preface to Geography: already referred to, chap 1., for the same fact.

§ See, for a long list of these Welsh denominations of places, Chalmers's Coledonia, vol. i. chap. 1.—"In the laborious work of Mr. Chalmers," says Dr. Pritchard, "there is a collection of such terms, which seems amply sufficient to satisfy the most incredulous, that the dialect of the Cambro-Britons was, at one period, the prevailing idiom on the north-eastern parts of Scotland."

A few instances are mentioned by Chalmers, in which the names given by the Picts or Welsh were superseded by their Scoto-Irish successors. Thus it appears from charters of the twelfth century, that *Inver* was substituted by the Scots for the *Aber* of the previous inhabitants; David I. having granted to the monastery of May "*Inver*-in qui fuit *Aber*-in:" and the influx of the Nethy into the Ern, whose familiar name had been *Aber*-nethy, was changed by the later people into *Inver*-nethy, and both these names it is added, still remain.

to have been derived;—and that, instead of the Welsh having become the Picts, as was supposed by Camden and others, the result of the evidence shows, on the contrary, that the Picts became the Welsh.

Obscure and involved as are the records of British history for some ages after the departure of the Romans, there can yet enough be discerned, through the darkness, to enable us to track the course of this warlike people, in their resistless career towards the south, as well as in that gradual change of name which they underwent during their progress. The entire abdication of the island by the Romans was evidently the crisis of which the restless Picts availed themselves to carry their arms, with a view to permanent conquest, into regions they had before but temporarily devastated. Breaking through the long guarded frontier, they took possession, without any struggle, of all the midland provinces, reaching from the wall of Northumberland to the friths of Forth and Clyde, and there established the Regnum Cumbrense, or Kingdom of Strat-Clyde,* in whose mixed population—composed, as it was, of all the tribes of North Britain,—their old distinctive name of Picts began first to be unsettled and disused. Here, however, they continued to maintain themselves, against all the efforts of the Saxons to dispossess them; and under the German name of the Walli or Welsh, bestowed upon them by the invaders† may be traced as acting a distinguished part in the affairs of Britain for many centuries after.

To this epoch of their northern kingdom, all the traditions of the modern Welsh refer for their most boasted antiquities, and favourite themes of romance.‡ The name of their chivalrous hero, Arthur, still lends a charm to much of the topography of North Britain; and among the many romantic traditions connected with Sterling Castle, is that of its having once been the scene of the festivities of the Round Table. The poets Aneurin and Taliessen, the former born in the neighbourhood of the banks of the Clyde,§ graced the court, we are told, of Urien, the King of Reged, or Cumbria; and the title Caledonius bestowed on the enchanter Merlin, who was also a native of Strat-Clyde, sufficiently attests his northern and Pictish race. It may be added, as another strong confirmation of the identity between the Strat-Clyde Welsh and the Picts, that from the time of the total defeat of the latter by Keneth Macalpine, King of the Scots, no farther mention occurs of the kingdom of Strat-Clyde. The traditional story of the utter extinction of the Pictish people at this period, so far as to have left, we are told, not even a vestige of their language, bears upon the face of it the marks of legendary fiction; while the fact of their ancient title of Picts having been, about this time, eclipsed by their new designation of Walli, accounts satisfactorily for the origin and general belief of such a fable.

With respect to the period at which this people may be supposed to have fixed themselves in Wales, a series of migrations thither from Cumbria, at different intervals, have been recorded by the Chroniclers; and, among others, it is said that, in the year 890, a body of emigrants, under the command of a chief named Constantine, fought their way through the ranks of the Saxons to that country. But their main movement towards the south, whether voluntarily, or under pressure from the invader, must have occurred

* Pinkerton vainly endeavours to make a distinction between the Regnum Cumbrense and the Kingdom on the Clyde. (*Inquiry into the History of Scotland*, part ii. chap. 5.) Their identity has been clearly proved both by Innes (vol. i. chap. 2. art. 2) and Chalmers, book ii. chap. 2.

The author of a late popular history, Thierry, (*Hist. de la Conquete de l'Angleterre,*) has so far confounded the localities of the ancient Welsh history as to mistake Cumbria, the present county of Cumberland, for Wales. Speaking of the Northern Britons he says, "Les fugitifs de ces contrées avoient gagné le grand asile du pays de Galles, ou bien l'angle de terre hérissé de montagnes que baigne la mer au Golfe de Solway."

That the Picts, towards the end of the 8i2th century, formed the main part of the population of this kingdom, appears from a statement in the Life of St. Kentigern, by Jocelin, which shows that Galloway was, at this period, in the possession of the Picts; and it was probably about this time they began to be known by that name of Gelwejenses, which continued to be applied to them for many centuries after. (See *Innes*, vol. i. book 1. chap. 2.) While thus the Picts were called Galwejenses, we find Matthew of Westminster, at a later period, giving the same name to the Welsh; thereby identifying, in so far, the latter people with the Picts.

† "The name," says Camden, "by which the Saxon conqueror called foreigners, and every thing that was strange."

‡ Most of the great Welsh pedigrees, too, commence their line from princes of the Cumbrian Kingdom, and the archaiologist Lhuyd himself boasts of his descent from ancestors in the "province of Reged in Scotland, in the fourth century, before the Saxons came into Britain."—*Praf. to Archæologia.*

There is, however, visibly and from motives by no means unintelligible, an unwillingness, on the part of modern Welsh historians, to bring much into notice this northern seat of Cymbric enterprize and renown. For the name of Cumbria that of Reged is usually substituted, and the founders of their kingdom in Wales are alleged to have been the sons of a northern prince, named Cynetha, or Cenetha, (evidently their Scottish King Kenneth,) who, "leaving Cumberland and some neighbouring countries, where they ruled, to the government of one of their family, retired into North Wales, their grandmother's country, and seated themselves in the several divisions of it, as their names left on those places do, to this day, testify."—*Rowland's Mona Antiqua*, sect. ii. See also *Warrington's Hist. of Wales*, book i.

§ The river Clyde, in North Wales, was, it is clear, named by the new possessors of that country, after the Clyde of their old kingdom in Scotland.

at a much earlier period,—not more than a century, probably, from the time of their first outbreak from their own hills; as, before the end of the sixth age, they had already possessed themselves both of Wales and of Cornwall, and established a colony, apparently by conquest, in the province of Armoric Gaul.

Much more might be added in corroboration of this view of the origin of the Welsh, but that already, perhaps, I have dwelt somewhat more profusely upon it than may seem to be justified by the immediate object I had in view, which was, by inquiring into the most probable history of the Pictish people of Britain, to gain some clue to that of their fellow Scythians, the Scoti of Ireland; as well as some insight into the race and origin of those Cruithene, or Painted Men, who, about the same period, took up their abode in a part of the province of Ulster. With respect to the Scoti, the probability of their having been a Scandinavian people* is considerably strengthened by the weight of evidence and authority which pronounces the Picts to have been a colony from the same quarter, as their joint history is thus rendered concurrent and consistent; and it seems naturally to have followed from the success of the former in gaining possession of Ireland, that others of the adventurous rovers of the North should try their fortunes in the same region. Of that detachment of Pictish adventurers which fixed their quarters, as we have said, in the North of Ireland, there will occur occasions to take some notice, in the course of the following pages. I shall here only remark that, by their intermixture with the primitive inhabitants of the country, they were doubtless the means of engrafting on the native tongue those words of Cimbric origin which, notwithstanding the radical difference between the two languages, has given to the Irish and the Welsh so imposing an appearance of affinity.†

CHAPTER VII.

HISTORY OF IRELAND FROM THE LANDING OF THE SCOTI COLONY TO THE ARRIVAL OF ST. PATRICK.

In commencing his history of the Milesian or Scotic monarchs, by far the most trustworthy of the Irish annalists informs us, "that all the records of the Scots, before the time of King Kimbaoth, are uncertian."‡ This monarch, who, according to the senachies, was the seventy-fifth King of Ireland, and the fifty-seventh of the Milesian dynasty, flourished, as we learn from the same authorities, about 300 years before Christ: but the learned Dr. O'Connor, by whom the lists of the ancient kings have been examined with a degree of zeal and patience worthy of a far better task, has shown that, according to the regal lists of the senachies themselves, the reign of Kimbaoth cannot be carried back to a remoter date than 200 years before our era. The reader who has attended, however, to the facts adduced in the foregoing pages, proving how groundless are the claims to a remote antiquity which have been advanced for the Scotic or Milesian colony, will, I doubt not, be of opinion that a scheme of chronology which supposes the fifty-sixth monarch of the Scotic dynasty to have existed 200 or 300 years before the birth of Christ,

* Bishop Stillingfleet declares strongly in favour of the opinion that the Picts "were from the same parts" as the Scots; but interprets Bede's words rather too favourably for his purpose, when he represents him as saying that "on being carried by a tempest to Ireland, they found their Gentem Scotorum, i. e. (adds the bishop) their countrymen, the Scythians." Among the most convincing indications of their having been kindred tribes, are those deduced by Buchanan, from their facility of intercourse on first meeting, their mutual confidence and intermarriages, and the amicable neighbourhood of their settlement afterwards in North Britain. "Facile majores Pictorum Scotis fuisse conciliatos puto, atque ab eisdem, ut traditur, adjutos, ut homines cognatos, ejusdem fere linguæ nec dissimilium rituum."—*Hist. Scot.* lib. ii. 27.

† The amount of this resemblance between the two languages appears to be, after all, but trifling. "There is," says Mr. Roberts, the intelligent Welsh scholar, already quoted, "about one word in fifteen similar, but rarely the same, in sound and signification, in both languages. In the first nine columns of the Irish Dictionary, printed by Lhuyd in his Archæologia, there are 400 words, of which I have not been able to discover more than twenty, in common to both languages, nor have I succeeded better in several trials. Moreover, the grammatical structure, as to the declension and construction, are *radically* different."—*Chronicle of the Kings of Britain.*

A learned German glossologist, Adelung, is also to be numbered among those who consider the Welsh tongue to be a descendant from that of the Belgæ, and not from that of the Celtæ.

‡ Tigernach.—"Omnia monumenta Scotorum usque Cimbaoth incerta erant." For some account of this annalist, who died A. D. 1088, see Ware's Writers.—*Rer. Hibern. Script.* tom. ii. &c. &c.

may be got rid of with a much less expenditure of learning and labour than it has cost Dr. O'Connor, and other such zealots in the cause of antiquity, to establish and support it.

Without entering at present, however, into any farther examination of the chronological reckonings and regal lists of the antiquaries, or pointing out how far, in spite of the extravagant dates assigned to them, the reality of the events themselves may be relied upon, I shall proceed to lay before the reader a sketch of the history of Pagan Ireland, from the time of the landing of the Scotic colony, to the great epoch of the conversion of the Irish to Christianity by St. Patrick. Into any of those details of war and bloodshed which form so large a portion of our annals, Pagan as well as Christian, I shall not think it necessary to enter; while, of the civil transactions, my object will be to select principally those which appear to be most sanctioned by the general consent of tradition, and afford, at least, pictures of manners, even where they may be thought questionable as records of fact.

A decisive victory over the Tuatha-de-Danaan, the former possessors of the country, having transferred the sovereignty to Heber and Heremon, the sons of the Spanish king, Milesius, these two brothers divided the kingdom between them; and while Leinster and Munster were, it is said, the portion assigned to Heber, the younger brother, Heremon, had for his share the provinces of Ulster and Connaught. There was also a third brother, Amergin, whom they appointed Arch-Bard, or presiding minister over the respective departments of Law,* Poetry, Philosophy, and Religion. In the divided sovereignty thus exercised by the family, may be observed the rudiments of that system of government which prevailed so long among their successors; while, in the office of the Arch-Bard we trace the origin of those metrical legislators and chroniclers who took so prominent a part in public affairs under all the Scotic princes.

In another respect, it must be owned, the commencement of the Milesian monarchy was marked strongly by the features which but too much characterized its whole course. A beautiful valley, which lay in the territories of Heremon, had been, for some time, a subject of dispute between the two brothers;† and their differences at length kindling into animosity, led to a battle between them on the plains of Geisiol, where Heber lost his life, leaving Heremon sole possessor of the kingdom. Even the peaceful profession of the Arch-Poet Amergin did not exempt him from the effects of the discord thus early at work; as, in a subsequent battle, this third son of Milesius fell also a victim to his brother Heremon's sword.‡

To the reign of Heremon, the Bardic historians refer the first coming of the people called Picts into these regions. Landing upon the eastern coast of Ireland, they proposed to establish themselves on the island; but the natives, not deeming such a settlement expedient, informed them of other islands, on the north-east, which were uninhabited, and where they might fix their abode. To this suggestion the Picts readily assented, but first desired that some of the Milesian women might be permitted to accompany them; pledging themselves solemnly that, should they become masters of that country they were about to invade, the sovereignty should be ever after vested in the descendants of the female line.§ This request having been granted, the Pictish chiefs, accompanied

* "Amergin was the Brehon of the colony, and was also a poet and philosopher."—*O'Reilly on the Brehon Laws.*

† The particulars of this quarrel are thus stated by Keating:—"The occasion of the dispute was the possession of three of the most delightful valleys in the whole island. Two of these lay in the division of Heber Fionn, and he received the profits of them; but his wife, being a woman of great pride and ambition, envied the wife of Heremon the enjoyment of one of those delightful valleys, and, therefore, persuaded her husband to demand the valley of Heremon; and, upon a refusal, to gain possession of it by the sword; for she passionately vowed she never would be satisfied till she was called the Queen of the three most fruitful Valleys in the Island."

‡ There are still extant three poems attributed to this bard, one of them said to have been written by him while he was coasting on the shores of Ireland. This latter poem the reader will find, together with a brief outline of its meaning, in Hardiman's Irish Minstrelsy, vol. ii. notes. "There still remain," says the enthusiastic editor, "after a lapse of nearly three thousand years, fragments of these ancient bards (Amergin and Lugad, the son of Ith,) some of which will be found included in the following pages, with proofs of their authenticity."—*Prefaces.*

The following is the account given of the supposed poems of Amergin by the learned editor of the Transactions of the Iberno-Celtic Society.—"These compositions are written in the Bearla Feini, and accompanied with an interlined gloss, without which they would be unintelligible to modern Irish scholars. The gloss itself requires much study to understand it perfectly, as the language is obsolete, and must in many places be read from bottom to top."

§ This matrimonial compact of the Picts is thus, in a spirit far worse than absurd, misrepresented by O'Halloran:—"They, at the same time, requested wives from Heremon, engaging, in the most solemn manner, that not only then, but for ever after, if they or their successors should have issue by a British, and again by an Irish woman, that the issue of this last *only* should be capable of succeeding to the inheritance! and which law continued in force to the days of Venerable Bede, i. e. about 2000 years! a mark of such striking distinction that it cannot be paralleled in the history of any other nation under the sun!"—Vol. ii. chap. 4.

This policy of deducing the royal succession through the female line, not through the male, was always retained by the Picts.

by their Milesian wives, set sail for the islands bordering on Scotland, and there established their settlement.

Passing over the immediate successors of Heremon, we meet with but little that is remarkable till we arrive at the reign of the idolater Tighernmas, who, while offering sacrifice, at a great popular convention, to the monstrous idol, Crom-Cruach, was, together with the vast multitude around him, miraculously destroyed. During the reign of this king, gold is said to have been, for the first time, worked in Ireland; a mine of that metal having been discovered in the woods to the east of the river Liffey.*

In the reign of Achy, who was the immediate successor of Tighernmas, a singular law was enacted, regulating the exact number of colours by which the garments of the different classes of society were to be distinguished.† Plebeians and soldiers were, by this ordinance, to wear but a single colour; military officers of any inferior rank, two; commanders of battalions, three; the keepers of houses of hospitality,‡ four; the nobility and military knights, five; and the Bards and Ollamhs, who were distinguished for learning, six, being but one colour less than the number worn by the reigning princes themselves. These regulations are curious; not only as showing the high station allotted to learning and talent, among the qualifications for distinction, but as presenting a coincidence rather remarkable with that custom of patriarchal times, which made a garment of many colours the appropriate dress of kings' daughters and princes.§

For a long period, indeed, most of the Eastern nations retained both the practice of dividing the people into different castes and professions, and also, as appears from the regulations of Giamschid, King of Persia,‖ this custom distinguishing the different classes by appropriate dresses. From the party-coloured garments worn by the ancient Scots, or Irish, is derived the national fashion of the plaid, still prevailing among their descendants in Scotland.

Among the numerous kings that, in this dim period of Irish history, pass like shadows before our eyes, the Royal Sage, Ollamh Fodhla,¶ is almost the only one who, from the strong light of tradition thrown round him, stands out as a being of historical substance and truth. It would serve to illustrate the nature and extent of the evidence with which the world is sometimes satisfied, to collect together the various celebrated names which are received as authentic on the strength of tradition alone;** and few, perhaps, could claim a more virtual title to this privilege than the great legislator of the ancient Irish, Ollamh Fodhla. In considering the credit, however, that may safely be attached to the accounts of this celebrated personage, we must dismiss wholly from our minds the extravagant antiquity assigned to him†† by the seanachies; and as it has been shown that the date of the dynasty itself, of which he was so distinguished an ornament, cannot, at the utmost, be removed farther back than the second century before our era, whatever his fame may thus lose in antiquity it will be found to gain in probability; since, as we shall see when I come to treat of the credibility of the Irish annals, the epoch of this monarch, if not within the line to which authentic history extends, is, at least, not very far beyond it.

Some of the most useful institutions of Ollamh Fodhla are said to have but a short time survived himself. But the act which rendered his reign an important era in legislation

* "At Fothart," says Simon, "near the river Liffey, in the county of Wicklow, where gold, silver, copper, lead, and iron, have of late years been found out."—*Simon on Irish Coins.*

† A similar fancy for party-coloured dresses existed among the Celts of Gaul; and Diodorus describes that people as wearing garments flowered with all varieties of colour—χρωμασι παντοδαπως διηνθισμενους.—Lib. 5. The part of their dress which they called braccæ, or breeches, was so named from its being plaided; the word brac signifying in Celtic any thing speckled or party-coloured. The historian Tacitus, in describing Cæcina as dressed in the Gaulish fashion, represents him with breeches, or trowsers, and plaid mantle:—"Versicolore sago, braccas, tegmen barbarum indutus."—*Hist* lib. ii. cap. 20.

‡ An order of men appointed by the state, and endowed with lands, for the purpose of keeping constantly open house, and giving entertainment to all travellers in proportion to their rank. These officers are frequently mentioned in the Brehon laws; and, among other enactments respecting them, it is specified that each Bruigh shall keep in his house, for the amusement of travellers, Taibhle Fioch-thoille, or chess-boards.

§ Thus, Jacob made Joseph a coat of many colours, (Gen. xxxvii. 3.;) and Tamar (2 Sam. xiii. 18.) "had a garment of divers colours, for with such robes were the king's daughters that were virgins apparelled."

‖ Saádi veut aussi, que ce prince ait non seulement divisé les hommes en plusieures états et professions, mais qu'il les ait encore distingués par des habits et par des coiffures différentes."—*D'Herbelot.*

¶ Pronounced Ollav Folla. This quiescence of many of the consonants in our Irish names, render them far more agreeable to the ear than to the eye. Thus, the formidable name of Tigernach, our great annalist, is softened, in pronunciation, into Tierna.

** Among the most signal instances, perhaps, is that of the poet Orpheus, who, notwithstanding the decidedly-expressed opinion both of Aristotle and Cicero, that no such poet ever existed, still continues, and will of course for ever continue, to be regarded as a real historical personage

†† In fixing the period of this monarch's reign, chronologers have been widely at variance. While some place it no less than 1316 years before the Christian era, (Thady Roddy, MSS.) Plowden makes it 930 years, (Hist. Review, prelim. chap.) O'Flaherty between 700 and 800, and the author of the Dissertations, &c. about 600. (Sect 4.)

was the establishment of the Great Fes, or Triennial Convention at Tara, an approach so far to representative government that, in these periodical assemblies, the leading persons of the three orders of whom the political community consisted,—that is to say, the Monarch, the Druids or Ollamhs, and the Plebeians,—were convened for the purpose of passing such laws and regulations as the public good seemed to require.* In the presence of these assemblies, too, the different records of the kingdom were examined; whatever materials for national history the provincial annals supplied, were here sifted and epitomized, and the result entered in the great national Register called the Psalter of Tara.†

In a like manner, according to the historian Ctesias, who drew his own materials professedly from such sources, it was enjoined to the Persians, by an express law, that they should write down the annals of their country in the royal archives. In Ireland this practice of chronicling events continued to be observed to a late period; and not only at the courts of the different Kings, but even in the family of every inferior chieftain, a Seanachie, or historian, formed always a regular part of the domestic establishment. To this recording spirit, kept alive, as it was, in Christian times, by a succession of monastic chroniclers, we owe all those various volumes of Psalters and Annals with which the ancient literature of Ireland abounds.

The policy which Herodotus tells us was adopted among the Egyptians and the Lacedemonians, of rendering employments and offices hereditary in families, was also, from the time of Ollamh Fodhla down to a very recent period, the established usage in Ireland. This strange custom formed one of the contrivances of that ancient stationary system, which has been the means of keeping the people of the East and their institutions so little changed through all time. The same principle which led the Egyptians to prohibit their sculptors and painters from innovating, even with a view to improvement, on the ancient models transmitted to them, prompted them also to ordain, as the Irish did after them, that the descendants of a physician,‡ for instance, or an artificer, should continue physicians and artificers through all succeeding generations. Not only in their early adoption of this truly Eastern rule, but in the constancy with which, to this day, they have continued, through all changes of time, to adhere to most of their ancient characteristics and usages, the Irish have proved themselves in so far worthy of their oriental descent, and but too faithful inheritors of the same stationary principle.

Among the important offices transmitted hereditarily in Ireland, were those of heralds, practitioners in physic, bards, and musicians. To the professors of these arts Ollamh Fodhla assigned lands for their use; and also instituted a school of general instruction at Tara, which became afterwards celebrated under the name of the Mur-ollam-ham, or College of the Learned.

A long series of Kings, with scarcely a single event worthy of commemoration, fills up the interval between the reign of this monarch and the building of the palace of Emanie by King Kimboath: an event forming, as we have seen, a prominent era in the Irish annals, and from which Tigernach dates the dawn of authentic history. This splendid palace of the princes of Ulster, who were from thenceforward called Kings of Emania, had in its neighbourhood the mansion appropriated to celebrated Knights of the Red Branch, so triumphantly sung by the bards, and commemorated by the seanachies.

If the Bardic historians, in describing the glory and magnificence of some of these

* So represented by those zealous antiquaries O'Flaherty, O'Connor, &c.; but it will be shown presently that, like the Coloni of the Franks and the Ceorls of the Anglo-Saxons, the plebeians, under the ancient Irish government, were wholly excluded from political power.

† Keating speaks of this authentic Register of the Nation as extant in his time; but O'Connor says, "there is good reason to believe that no considerable part of it escaped the devastations of the Norman war." The following is all that the industrious Bishop Nicholson could learn of it: "What is now become of this Royal Monument is hard to tell; for some of our moderns affirm that they have lately seen it, while others as confidently maintain that it has not appeared for some centuries last past."—(*Historic Library*, chap. ii.) Parts of that collection of Irish Records, called the Psalter of Cashel, which was compiled in the tenth century, are supposed to have been transcribed from the ancient Psalter of Tara.

‡ "What is remarkable," says Smith in his History of Cork, "of this last family of the O'Cullinans, is, that it was never known without one or more physicians in it; which is remarked by Camden; insomuch, that when a person is given over, they have a saying in Irish, 'Even an O'Cullinan cannot cure him.' Which profession still continues in the family." (Book i. chap. 1.) An attempt has been made by Rollin, and not unplausibly, to justify this hereditary system.—"By this means," he says, "men became more able and expert in employments which they had always been trained up to from their infancy; and every man adding his own experience to that of his ancestors, was more capable of rising to perfection in his particular art. Besides, this wholesome institution, established anciently through the Egyptian nation, extinguished all irregular ambition," &c. (*Manners and Customs of the Egyptians.*) Herodotus, however, in the concluding sentence of the following passage, has laid open quietly the inherent absurdity of such a system. "In one instance, the Lacedæmonians observe the usage of Egypt: their heralds, musicians, and cooks, follow the profession of their fathers. The son of a herald is, of course, a herald, and the same of the other two professions. If any man has a louder voice than the son of a herald, it signifies nothing."—Lib. 6.

reigns, have shown no ordinary powers of flourish and exaggeration, it is to be hoped, for the credit of human nature, that they have also far outstripped the truth in their accounts of the discord, treachery, and bloodshed by which almost every one of these brief paroxysms of sovereignty was disgraced. Out of some two-and-thirty kings who are said to have reigned during the interval between Ollamh Fodhla and the royal builder of Emania, not more than three are represented as having died a natural death, and the great majority of the remainder fell by the hands of their successors.*

Though the building of the royal palace of Emania was assumed as a technical epoch by the chronologers, the accession of Hugony the Great, as he was called, proved, in a political point of view, an era still more remarkable; as, by his influence with the assembled States at Tara, he succeeded in annulling the Pentarchy; and moreover prevailed on the four provincial kings to surrender their right of succession in favour of his family, exacting from them a solemn oath, "by all things visible and invisible,"† not to accept of a supreme monarch from any other line. For the Pentarchal government this monarch substituted a division of the kingdom into twenty-five districts, or dynasties; thus ridding himself of the rivalry of provincial royalty, and at the same time, widening the basis of the monarchical or rather aristocratical power.‡ The abjuration of their right of succession, which had been extorted from the minor kings, was, as might be expected, revoked on the first opportunity that offered; but the system of government established in place of the Pentarchy, was continued down nearly to the commencement of our era, when, under the monarch Achy Fedloch, it was rescinded, and the ancient form restored.

After the reign of Hugony, there succeeds another long sterile interval, extending, according to the Bardic chronology, through a space of more than three hundred years, during which, with the exception of King Labhra's,§ return from Gaul at the head of a Gaulish colony—an event to which allusion has already been made—not a single public transaction is recorded worthy of notice; the names of the kings, as usual, succeeding each other at fearfully short intervals; and, in general, their accession and murder being the only events of their brief career recorded.

In the reign of Conary the Great, which coincides with the commencement of the Christian era, the name dwelt upon, with most interest, by the chroniclers, is that of the young hero Cuchullin, whose death, in the full flush and glory of his career, took place, according to these authorities, in the second year of Christ. A. D. 2.

With the fame of this Irish warrior modern readers have been made acquainted by that splendid tissue of fiction and forgery imposed upon the world as the Poems of Ossian, where, in one of those flights of anachronism not unfrequent in that work, he is confronted with the bard and hero, Oisin, who did not flourish till the middle of the third century. The exploits of Cuchullin, Conal Cearnach, and other Heroes of the Red Branch, in the memorable Seven Years' War between Connaught and Ulster,‖ are among those themes on which the old chroniclers and bardic historians most delight to dwell. The circumstance recorded of the young Cuchullin by these annalists, that, when only seven years old, he was invested with knighthood, might have been regarded as one of the marvels of traditionary story, had we not direct evidence, in a fact mentioned by Froissart, that, so late as the time of that chronicler, the practice of knighting

* The language in which O'Flaherty and O'Halloran relate some of these events is but too well suited to their subject. "Lugad Luagny, the son of the King Inatmar," says O'Flaherty, "cut Bresal's throat, and got the crown."—(Part iii. chap. 41.) "His reign," says O'Halloran, of another monarch, "lasted but five years, when the sword of his successor cut his way through him to the Irish throne."—(Vol. ii. chap. 7.)

† Annal. IV. Magist.—In these annals, Ugony the Great, is styled "King of Hibernia and all Western Europe, as far as the Tuscan sea."

‡ According to the view taken by some writers of this change, the principle of the Pentarchal government was therein preserved, as Ugony retained the division of the country into five provinces, and in each established a Pentarchy.

§ In the accounts of the reign of this monarch, as given by Keating and others, are introduced two romantic stories, resembling (one of them) the fabulous adventure of Richard Cœur de Lion and Blondel; and the other, the story of Midas's ears, and the miraculous revealment of his secret. In the weak and verbose work of Dr. Warner, (*Hist. of Ireland*, vol i. book 3.) the reader will find these stories diluted through some half dozen pages.

‖ This celebrated septennial war bears, in Irish history, the name of the Tain-bo-Cuailgne, or the Spoils of the Cattle at Cuailgne; one of the chief causes of its origin having been the seizure of an immense quantity of cattle by the troops of Maud, the Queen of Connaught, at Cuailgne, in the county of Louth. The march of her army on this expedition, commanded by Fergus, the dethroned King of Ulster—the splendour of the queen herself, seated in an open chariot, with her Asiun, or crown of gold, on her head—the names of the Champions of the Red Branch, who bravely encountered her mighty force—all these circumstances are found detailed in the stories and romances respecting this memorable invasion; and from some of these fictions, it appears, Macpherson derived the ground-work of his poems of Fingal and Temora. See Mr. O'Connor's Dissertation on the History of Scotland, where (in speaking of these poems) it is said, "They are evidently founded on the romances and vulgar stories of the Tan-bo-Cualgney war, and those of the Fiana Ereann."

boys at the very same age,—more especially those of royal parentage,—was still retained in Ireland.*

From what has been said of the high station and dignities assigned to their Bards and Antiquaries, it will have been seen that the political system of the ancient Irish, the Literary or Bardic order, which appears to have been distinct from the Druidical, formed one of the most active and powerful springs. Supported by lands set aside for their use, and surrounded by privileges and immunities which, even in the midst of civil commotion, rendered their persons and property sacred, they were looked up to not only as guardians of their country's history and literature, but as interpreters and dispensers of its laws. Thus endowed and privileged, this class of the community came at length to possess such inordinate power, and, by a natural consequence, so much to abuse it, that a popular reaction against their encroachments was the result, and their whole order was about to be expelled from the kingdom. In this crisis of their fate, the heroic Conquovar, King of Ulster, espoused the cause of the Bards; and, protesting strongly against the policy of suppressing them altogether, succeeded in effecting such reformations in the constitution of their order, more especially in all that related to their judicial proceedings, as at length restored them to public favour. The better to regulate their decisions for the future, he caused a digest of the ancient laws to be formed, under the auspices of Forchern, and two other distinguished poets; and the code thus compiled was called by their admiring contemporaries, Breathe Neimidh, or the Celestial Judgments.† In having poets thus for their lawgivers, the Irish but followed the example of most of the ancient nations; among whom, in the infancy of legislation, the laws were promulgated always in verse, and often publicly sung; and even so late as the time of Strabo, the chief magistrate of the people of Mazaca, in Cappadocia, (who was to them what jurisconsuls were to the Romans,) bore the title, as we are informed by Strabo, of the Law-singer.‡

As we advance into the Christian era, a somewhat clearer and more extended range of horizon opens upon us; as well from our approaching that period to which the authentic annals of the country extend, as from the light which thenceforward the Roman accounts of Britain throw incidentally on the affairs of the sister island. It was during the reign of the Irish monarch Crimthan, or, according to others, that of his successor Fiachad, that Agricola was engaged in pursuing his victorious enterprises in Britain; and the few facts relating to Ireland, which his philosophic biographer discloses, are, in themselves, worth whole volumes of vague, ordinary history: as, though but glimpses, the insight which they afford is vivid and searching. The simple statement, for instance, of Tacitus, that, at the period when he wrote, the waters and harbours of Ireland were, through the means of commerce and of navigators, better known than those of Britain,§ opens such a retrospect at once into her foregone history, as, combined with similar glimpses in other writings of antiquity, renders credible her claims to early civilization, and goes far to justify some of the proud boasts of her annals.

A. D. 75 to 82.

In a far other sense, the view opened by the historian into the interior of Ireland's politics at that moment,—the divided and factious state of her people, and the line of policy which, in consequence, the shrewd Agricola, as ruler of Britain, was preparing to pursue towards them,—is all of melancholy importance, as showing at how early a period Irishmen had become memorable for disunion among themselves, and how early those who were interested in weakening them, had learned to profit by their dissensions.

* In Froissart's curious account of the knighting of the four Irish kings by Richard II., it is related, that, on being asked whether they would not gladly receive the order of knighthood from the King of England, "they answered how they were knights already, and that sufficed for them. I asked where they were made knights, and how, and when. They answered, at the age of seven years they were made knights in Ireland, and that a king maketh his son a knight.... And then this young knight shall begin to just with small spears against a shield, set on a stake, in the field; and the more spears that he breaketh, the more he shall be honoured."—Froissart, vol. ii. chap. 202.

"We are told," says Sir James Ware, in a MS. Life of St. Carthag, Bishop of Lismore, who flourished in the seventh century, that "Moelfullus, one of the petty princes of Kerry, intending to knight St. Carthag, while he was a boy, would have put into his hand a sword and target, being the badge or cognizance of knighthood."—*Antiquities*, chap. 26.

† This translation of the term, which has been adopted by all other authorities on the subject, is, I find, questioned by the learned Irish scholar, Mr. O'Reilly, (Trans. of Iberno-Celtic Society,) who contends, in opposition to O'Flaherty, the O'Connors, O'Halloran, &c., that the meaning of the words Breathe Neimidh is the Laws of the Nobles. This is but one of numerous instances that might be adduced, in which important Irish words are shown to be capable of entirely different meanings in the hands of different interpreters,—seeming in so far to justify those charges of vagueness and confusion which Pinkerton, in his hatred of every thing Celtic, brings so constantly against the Irish language. See Inquiry, &c., part iii. chap. 2.

‡ Αιχωμιους και νομωδους, ους ωνομαζον αυτους εξηγητας των νομων, lib. 12.

§ Melius aditus portusque per commercia et negociatores cogniti.—*Agric.* cap. 24.

"One of their petty kings," says Tacitus, "who had been forced to fly by some domestic faction, was received by the Roman general, and under a show of friendship detained for ulterior purposes."* The plan successfully pursued by Cæsar towards Gaul, of playing off her various factions against each other,† and making her own sons the ready instruments of her subjugation, would have been the policy doubtless of Agricola towards Ireland, had these ulterior purposes been put in execution. The object of the Irishman was to induce the Romans to invade his native country; and by his representations, it appears, Agricola was persuaded into the belief that, with a single legion, and a small body of auxiliaries, he could conquer and retain possession of Ireland.‡

It would hardly be possible, perhaps, in the whole compass of history, to find a picture more pregnant with the future, more prospectively characteristic, than this of a recreant Irish prince in the camp of the Romans, proffering his traitorous services to the stranger, and depreciating his country as an excuse for betraying her. It is, indeed, mournful to reflect, that, at the end of nearly eighteen centuries, the features of this national portrait should remain so very little altered; and that with a change only of scene from the tent of the Roman general to the closet of the English minister or viceroy, the spectacle of an Irishman playing the game of his country's enemies has been, even in modern history, an occurrence by no means rare.

Offence has been taken by some Irish historians at the slur thrown, as they think, on the courage of their countrymen, by the hope attributed to the Roman general of being able to effect an easy conquest of Ireland.§ But they ought to have recollected that, more than a thousand years after, from the same fatal cause, internal disunion, a far smaller force than Agricola thought requisite for his purpose, laid the ancient Milesian monarchy prostrate at the feet of Britain. At the same time, it cannot but be acknowledged that the conduct of the Romans respecting Ireland, by no means warrants the supposition that they held its conquest to be at all an easy task. The immense advantages that must attend the acquisition of a country placed so immediately in the neighbourhood of their British possessions, were, we know, fully appreciated by them; nor could any views be more keen and far-sighted than those of Agricola, as unfolded by Tacitus, both as regarded the commercial strength that must accrue to Britain‖ from the occupation of Ireland, and the strong moral and political influence which the example of this latter country must ever exercise, whether for good or for evil, over the fortunes of her more powerful neighbour. He saw that the Britons, says the historian, could never be effectively curbed as long as there was a people yet unmastered in their neighbourhood; and that, to effect this object, the example of liberty must be removed wholly from their sight.¶ Could the sagacious Agricola again visit this earth, he would find his views, as to the moral influence of the two countries upon each other, fully confirmed;—would see that the oppression of the weaker people by the stronger, has produced a reaction, which may be, in time, salutary to both; and that already, in all the modes, at least, of struggling for liberty, Ireland has become the practised instructor of England.

With so deep a sense of the great value of the possession, there can hardly be a more convincing proof that the Romans considered its conquest not easy, than the simple fact that they never attempted it; and that, though Britain continued to be harassed by the Irish for near three centuries after, not a single Roman soldier ever set foot on their shores. Even when the flight of their eagles had extended as far as the Orcades, Ireland still remained free.**

How little the Irish themselves were in fear of invasion at this very period, when, as

* Agricola expulsum seditione domestica unum ex Regulis gentis exceperat, ac specie amicitiæ in occasionem retinebat.—*Agric.* cap. 24.

† De Bell. Gal. lib. vi. c. 13.

‡ Sæpe ex eo audivi legione una et modicis auxiliis debellari obtinerique Heberniam posse.—*Agric.* ib.

§ The estimate of Strabo respecting Britain is, considering all things, still less flattering. To keep her tributary, he says, at least a legion and a few horse would be requisite. Τυλαχίσου μὲν γὰρ ὅσος ταγμάτος χρηζοι ἄν, καὶ ἱππικὴ τινος.—Liv. iv. To the courage of the Caledonians, according to this standard, the highest testimony seems to have been paid; as, about the year 230, while one legion was found sufficient to keep all the rest of Britain in subjection, two were employed upon the borders, against this people.—Dio. 55.

‖ Si quidem Hibernia, medio inter Britanniam atque Hispaniam sita, et Gallico quoque mari opportuna, valentissimam imperii partem magnis invicem usibus miscuerit.—*Agric.* ib.

¶ "Idque etiam adversus Britanniam profuturum, si Romana ubique arma, et velut e conspectu libertas tolleretur."—*Agric.* ib. The remarks of La Bletterie, the French translator, upon this chapter, prove how pregnant with the seeds of the future it appeared to him. "Ireland has more harbours and more convenient than any other country in Europe. England has but a small number. Ireland, if she could shake off the British yoke, and form an independent state, would ruin the British commerce; but, to her misfortune, England is too well convinced of this truth.

** "Hibernia Romanis etiam Orcadum insularum dominium tenentibus inaccessa, rarò et tepide ab ullo unquam expugnata et subacta est."—*Gulielmus Parv. Nubriss. Hist. Rer. Angl.*

Tacitus informs us, the coast opposite to their shores was lined with Roman troops, may be judged from the expedition to Britain undertaken by the monarch Crimthan, for the purpose of aiding his ancient allies, the Picts, in their heroic stand against the legions of Rome. In the course of this visit, the Irish monarch is said to have first set the daring example of those predatory incursions into the Roman province by which the Britons continued to be harassed for so long a period after; and having been eminently successful, as it appears, on this occasion, he returned to his dominions laden with a variety of rich and even luxurious booty, the particulars of which have been triumphantly enumerated by the annalists.*

On the death of this monarch, whose name enjoys, as we have seen, the peculiar distinction of being associated in the page of history with those of Tacitus and Agricola, a more than usually troubled period succeeded; during which, even that frail and nominal pledge for the security of the public peace, which the descent of the monarchy by inheritance afforded, was set at defiance by a plebeian usurper and his followers, and the whole island made one scene of promiscuous strife and bloodshed. A spirit of revolt among the descendants of the Belgic tribes, whose chief seat was Connaught, but of whom numbers were also dispersed throughout the other provinces, was the primary cause of all this commotion. The state of Ireland, indeed, at this crisis, shows at how early a period was naturalized on her shores that principle of exclusion and proscription which, in after ages, flourished there so rankly. Under the Milesian or Scotic rule, not merely were the great mass of the old Celtic population held in subjection by the sword, but also the descendants of the foreign settlers, the remains of the conquered Belgic tribes, were wholly excluded from every share in the administration of public affairs, and treated in every respect, as a servile and helot class. Confederated among themselves by a common sense of humiliation and wrong, these people, having concerted their measures, took the opportunity of a great public assembly, held at Magh-Cru, in Connaught, to strike the first blow of their conspiracy. An indiscriminate massacre of all the princes and chiefs collected on that occasion was the signal of general revolt among their confederates throughout the kingdom; and being joined also by the larger portion of
A. D. the Celtic population, to whom the dominant caste was odious, they succeeded,
90. with but little opposition, in overturning their legitimate monarchy, and placing one of their own race and rank, Carbre Cat-can, upon the throne.

The five years during which the reign of this usurper lasted are described by the annalists as a period of general gloom and sterility,—"no grain on the stalk, no fruitfulness in the waters, the herds all barren, and but one acorn on the oak." Abandoned wholly to the rule of the rabble, there appeared no hope for the nation of better days; when, unexpectedly, on the death of Carbre, the magnanimity of one individual changed the whole face of affairs. The usurper's son and intended successor, Moran, instead of accepting the bequeathed crown for himself, employed all his influence to have it replaced upon a legitimate brow, and succeeded in restoring the royal race in the person of Feredach, son of Crimthan. The post of Chief Judge of the kingdom, bestowed upon him by the monarch, afforded to Moran the means of completing his generous work, and of rendering popular, by a course of unexampled clemency and justice, that restoration of which he had been so disinterestedly the author. To the fame acquired by this judge for his upright decisions, is owing the fable of the Iodham Moran,† or Moran's Collar, which is said to have given warning, by increased pressure around the neck of the wearer, whenever he was about to pronounce an unjust sentence.

The administration of this honest counsellor succeeded in earning for his king the honour of the title of the Just; and, under their joint sway, the whole country enjoyed a lull of tranquillity as precious as it was rare. This calm, however, was but of brief duration: in the reign of the son of this monarch, Fiach, there broke out a second revolt of the plebeians, or Attacots,‡ which raged even more fiercely than the former, and in

* In the long list of articles specified by the Four Masters, as composing this mass of plunder, are mentioned, a suit of armour ornamented with embossed gold and gems, a military cloak with golden fringe, a sword with figures of serpents upon it in chased gold, and a brace of greyhounds, joined together by a silver chain, whose price is estimated, according to the primitive usage of barter, at the value of 300 cows.

† A golden collar or breast-plate, supposed by Vallancey to be the Iodhain Morain, was found, some years since, in the county of Limerick, twelve feet deep, in a turf bog. "It is made of thin plated gold, and chased in a very neat and workmanlike manner; the breast-plate is single, but the hemispherical ornaments at the top are lined throughout with another thin plate of pure gold."—*Collectan. Hibern.* No. 13.

The traditional memory of this chain or collar (says O'Flanigan) is so well preserved to this day, that it is a common expression for a person asseverating absolute truth to say, "I would swear by Moran's chain for it."—*Trans. of Gaelic Society*, vol. i.

‡ The Plebeians engaged in this rebellion, are, in general, called Attacots, a name corrupted from the compound Irish term Attach-tuatha, which signifies, according to Dr. O'Connor, the Giant Race, (Prol. i. 74;) but, according to Mr. O'Reilly's version, simply the Plebeians.

which the provincial kings took part with the insurgents against the monarchial cause. At the head of this royal insurrection was Elim, the King of Ulster; and so successful for a time, with the aid of the populace, was his rebellion, that the young monarch, Tuathal, found himself compelled to fly to North Britain, where, taking refuge at the court of his maternal grandfather, the King of the Picts, he determined to await a turn of fortune in his favour. Nor was it long before a great majority of the people themselves, wearied with their own excesses, and moreover chastened into a little reflection by that usual result of such seasons of outbreak, a famine, began to bethink themselves of the claims of their rightful sovereign, the grandson of their favourite king, Feredach the Just. Full of compunction for their ingratitude, they despatched messengers to solicit his return; in prompt obedience to which summons, the monarch landed at the head of a body of Pictish troops, and marching directly to Tara, was elected sovereign amidst the acclamations of his subjects. From thence, taking the field instantly against the rebels, he pursued his course, from victory to victory, throughout the kingdom, till the usurpation was wholly extinguished, the former relations of society every where restored, and the monarch himself hailed with general acclamation under the title of Tuathal, the Acceptable. A. D. 126. A. D. 130.

This second Plebeian War—to use the term applied to it by Irish historians—having been thus happily terminated, Tuathal convoked, according to custom, the General Assembly of the States at Tara, for the purpose of consulting with them respecting the general affairs and interests of the kingdom, but more especially with a view to the arrangement of the important question of the succession. In a country where kings were so very numerous, and all of them elective, every new demise of royalty was, of course, but a new signal for discord; and the sovereign crown being more than the rest an object of rivalry and ambition, was in proportion the greatest source of strife. Efforts had more than once been made to confine the right of succession to one family, and thereby limit at least the range of the mischief; but the temptation to violate all such restrictions had been found stronger than the oath pledged to observe them. The fatal consequence, however, of the late interruptions of the old Heremonian line of descent seemed to call imperatively for some protection against the recurrence of such disorders; and accordingly Tuathal found no difficulty in inducing the States of the kingdom to proffer their ancient and solemn oath, "by the sun, moon, and stars," that, as long as Ireland should be encircled by the sea, they would acknowledge him alone as their lawful monarch. The same pledges had been given to his predecessors, Heremon and Hugony; and, in all three instances, had been alike violated as soon as the breath had left the royal frame.

Under this monarch, the county of Meath, which occupied the centre of the island, was enlarged by a grant of land from each of the other provinces; and, under the name of "The Mensal Lands of the Monarch of Ireland," was appropriated thenceforth as an appanage of the royal domain. To gratify the taste of his people for conventions and festivals, he ordained that, in addition to the Triennial Council of Tara, there should be held annually three assemblies of the kingdom; one at Tlactha, on the night of Samhin, where fires were lighted and sacrifices offered to that divinity; another, on the day of the Baal-fire, at the sacred hill of Usneach; and a third, on the plains of Taltin, in the Ultonian district,* where those annual sports, introduced in the time of the Damnonian kings, were revived.

A far less creditable sample of his policy was the enormous mulct imposed by him on the province of Leinster, in revenge for the conduct of its ruler, Achy; thus dooming an unoffending people and their posterity to atone for the crimes of one worthless prince. This oppressive fine, known by the name of the Boarian or Boromean tribute, was exacted every second year, and continued to be the cause of much confusion and bloodshed till the year 693; when, in the reign of King Finnacta, through the intercession of St. Moling, it was remitted.

The offence by which Achy, King of Leinster, drew down on that province so many centuries of taxation, though expanded by Keating and Warner into a romance of some pages, may thus, in a few brief sentences, be narrated. Having espoused one of the daughters of the monarch Fuathal, and carried her home to his own kingdom, the Leinster prince, in little more than a year after their union, made his appearance again at Tara; and informing the monarch, with every demonstration of sorrow, that his young queen was dead, obtained permission to pay his addresses to her sister, and succeeded in making her also his bride. On arriving with her royal husband in his own province, the young princess found his queen still living; so great was her surprise and shame at this

* Tertia apud Taltea, in Ultoniæ portione.—*Rer. Hib. Script.* Prol. ii. 79.

discovery, that she but for a few minutes, we are told, survived the shock. The deceived queen also, who, in her ignorance of the real circumstances, had flown with delight to receive her sister, as a visiter, on being informed of the sad truth of the story, took it no less deeply to heart; and, wounded alike by the perfidy of her lord, and the melancholy fate of his young victim, pined away and died. For this base act, which ought to have been avenged only upon the unmanly offender, not merely were his subjects, but all their posterity for more than five hundred years, compelled to pay every second year to the reigning monarch that memorable tribute,* which, contested as it was in most instances, superadded to the numerous occasions of collision for ever arising, throughout the country, an almost regularly recurring crisis of confusion and bloodshed.

During the reign of Tuathal, there were appointed courts of municipal jurisdiction for the better regulation of the concerns of tradesmen and artificers; an institution which, could we place reliance on the details relating to it, would imply rather an advanced state of interior traffic and merchandise. One fact which appears pretty certain from these accounts is, that previously to the system now introduced, none of the Milesian or dominant caste had condescended to occupy themselves in trade;—all mechanical employments and handicrafts being left to the descendants of the old conquered tribes; while for the issue of the minor branches of the Milesians were reserved the appointments in the militia of Erin, and the old hereditary offices of antiquaries, bards, physicians, and judges.

Whatever, in other respects, may have been the civilization of the Irish before the reign of King Feidlim, (A. D. 164,) their notions of criminal jurisprudence were
A. D. as yet but rude and barbarous; since we learn, that the old law of retaliation was
164. then, for the first time, exchanged for the more lenient as well as less demoralizing mode of punishment by a mulct or Eric. Some writers, it is true, have asserted† that the very reverse of what has been just stated was the fact; and that Feidlim, finding the Law of Compensation already established, introduced the Lex Talionis in its stead. But this assuredly would have been to retrograde rather than to advance in civilization;—one of the first steps towards civility, in the infancy of all nations, having been the substitution, in criminal justice, of fines proportionate to the offences,‡ for the savage law of retaliation and the right of private revenge. Should even this improved stage of jurisprudence, under which murders of the darkest kind might be compounded for, appear sufficiently barbarous, it should be recollected that neither the Greeks§ at the time of the Trojan war, nor the English under their great ruler Alfred, had yet advanced a step farther.

To Feidlim the Legislator succeeded, after a short period, his son Con of the Hundred Battles; a prince whose long reign was devoted, as his distinctive title imports, to a series of conflicts which seem to have been as various in their success, as they were murderous and devastating in their consequences. From the family of this hero descended that race of chieftains who, under the title of the Dalriadic kings, supplied Albany, the modern Scotland, with her first Scotish rulers; Carbry Riada,—the
A. D. son of Conary the Second by the daughter of the monarch Con,—having been the
358. chief who, about the middle of the third century, established that Irish settlement in Argyleshire,‖ which, taking the name of its princely founder, grew up, in the

* According to the old history, cited by Keating, called the Fine of Leinster, this tribute, which was paid through the reigns of forty kings, consisted of 3000 cows, as many hogs and sheep, 3000 copper caldrons, as many ounces of silver, and the same number of mantles. The number of each kind of cattle demanded is stated variously by different authorities; some making it so few as 300 (MacCurtin's Brief Discourse,) and others as high as 15,000.—MS. quoted by Dr. O'Connor.

† See Warner (History of Ireland, vol. i. book 4.,) whose confused notions respecting this law are adopted, and rendered still "worse confounded," by the author of the Dissertations on the Hist. of Ireland, sect. 11.

‡ The following is Spenser's account of the Law of the Eric, as existing among the Irish. Having remarked that, in the Brehon Law, there were "many things repugning both to God's law and man's," he adds, "as for example, in the case of murder, the Brehon, that is, their Judge, will compound between the murderer and the friends of the party murdered, which prosecute the action, that the malefactor shall give unto them, or to the child or wife of him that is slain, a recompense which they call an Eriach; by which wild law of theirs many murders amongst them are made up and smothered."—*View of the state of Ireland.*

Both by Spencer and Sir John Davis this custom of compounding the crime of homicide by a fine is spoken of as peculiar to the Irish; and the latter writer even grounds upon it a most heavy charge against that people; either forgetting that this mode of composition for manslaughter formed a part of the Anglo-Saxon code, or else wilfully suppressing that fact for the purpose of aggravating his list of charges against the old Brehon law. As there will occur other opportunities for considering this question, I shall here only remark that, however it may have been customary among the ancient Pagan Irish to punish homicide by a mulct, or Eric, alone, there are proofs that, in later times, and before the coming of the English, not only was wilful murder, but also the crimes of rape and robbery, made legally punishable by death.—See *Dissertations on the Laws of the ancient Irish, Collectan.* vol. i.—*O'Reilly, on the Brehon Laws*, sect. 8.—*Ledwich, Antiquities.—Hume*, vol. i. Appendix.

§ Iliad, l. ix. v. 630., where, by Homer, the blood-fine is called a penalty or mulct, and the relatives of the murdered person are represented as satisfied with the imposition.

‖ "In these Scoto-Irish chiefs of Argyleshire," says Sir Walter Scott, "historians must trace the original roots of the royal line."—History of Scotland, vol. i. chap. 2.

course of time, into the kingdom of Dalriada; and finally, on the destruction of the Picts by Keneth Mac-Alpine, became the kingdom of all Scotland.

The incursions of the Irish into those northern parts of Britain had commenced at a very remote period; and in the reigns of Olmucad, Tigernhmas, Reatch, and other monarchs, such expeditions to the coast of Albany are recorded to have taken place.* Without depending, however, solely on Irish authorities, the language of the Roman panagyrist, Eumenius, in extolling the victory gained in Britain by Constantius Chlorus, would fully suffice to prove that, previously to the coming of Cæsar, the neighbourhood of Ireland had been found troublesome to the Britons, and that they had been "accustomed"—for such is the phrase used by the orator—to invasions from that quarter.† But the first permanent settlement of the Irish in North Britain was the small colony, just mentioned, under Carbry Riada; which, fixing its abode in a part of those regions inhabited previously only by the Picts, or Caledonians, acquired, as Bede tells us, partly by friendship and partly by the sword, a settled home in the country;‡ while their founder, already possessing, in the north of Ireland, a seigniorial territory named, after himself, Dalriada,§ transmitted the same name to the infant kingdom he was thus the means of establishing in Albany.‖

As at this period, and for a long course of centuries after, the name of Scoti, or Scots, was applied exclusively to the Irish, I shall, to avoid confusion in speaking of the country now known as Scotland, call it either North Britain, or else by the name which it bore in those early days, Alba, or Albany.

The most tedious, as well as most sanguinary of the many wars in which the monarch of the Hundred Battles was engaged, was that maintained by him against the heroic Mogh-Nuad, king of the province of Leinster, during which, the latter carried away the palm of victory in no less than ten successive pitched battles. In consequence of these numerous defeats, to so low an ebb was the power of the monarch reduced that his antagonist became at length possessor of one half of the kingdom. A new division of the country accordingly took place,¶ which continued, nominally at least, to be recognised to a late period, assigning the northern part, under the name of Leath-Cuinn, or Con's half, to the monarch; while the southern, under the designation of Leath-Mogh, or Mogh's half, fell to the jurisdiction of the crown of Munster.

The most accomplished of all the Milesian princes, whether as legislator, soldier, or scholar, was, according to the general report of all his historians, the monarch Cormac Ulfadha, who flourished about the middle of the third century, and was the only one of the few sensible princes whom the line of Milesius produced that was able to inspire enough of respect for his institutions to secure their ex- A. D. 254.

* These early incursions are thus acknowledged by Buchanan:—"Nec semel Scotorum ex Hibernia transitum in Albium factum nostri annales referunt."—Hist. Scot. l. 2.

† "Adhuc natio (Britannica) etiam tunc rudis et solis Britanni Pictis modo et Hibernis adsueti hostibus, adhuc seminudi, facile Romanis armis signisque cesserunt."—*Panegyric. Vet.*

‡ "Procedente autem tempore Britannia post Britones et Pictos, tertiam Scotorum nationem in Pictorum parte recepit, qui, duce Reuda, de Hibernia egressi, vel amicitia vel ferro, sibimet inter eos sedes quas hactenus habent vindicarunt, a quo videlicet duce usque hodie Dalreudini vocantur."—L. i. c. 1.

§ This territory, which comprehended the north, north-west, and part of the south of the county of Antrim, is sometimes confounded with Dalaradia, which, as described by Harris, comprehended the south-east parts of the same county, and the greatest part, if not all, of the county of Down.

‖ For the truth of this important and now undoubted historical fact, we need but refer to the admissions of Scotch writers themselves. After mentioning the notice, Ammianus, of Scots in Britain, A. D. 360, the judicious Innes adds, "This may very well agree with the placing the coming in of Eocha Riada (the same as Bede's Reuda,) the first leader of the colony of the Scots into Britain, about the beginning of the third age. It is like he brought over at first but a small number, not to give jealousy to the ancient inhabitants of these parts, the Caledonians; but in the space of one hundred, or about one hundred and fifty years, that passed betwixt the time of their first coming in, and their being mentioned by Ammian, A. D. 360, they might have so increased both within themselves, and by accession of new auxiliaries from Ireland, that the Caledonians or Picts, finding them serviceable in their wars against the Romans and provincial Britons, were easily disposed to enlarge their possessions."—*Crit. Essay*, vol. ii. Dissert. ii. chap. 2.

Thus Pinkerton, also, whose observations prove him to have been thoroughly well informed upon the subject:—"Concerning the origin of the Dalreudini of Ireland, all the Irish writers, Keating, Usher, O'Flaherty, &c. &c. are concordant, and say the name sprung from Carbry Riada. Beda, a superior authority to all the Irish annalists put together, informs us that this very Riada led also the first colony of Scots to North Britain. So that the point stands clear, independently of the lights which Kennedy and O'Connor throw upon it."—Inquiry, part iv. chap. 2. Chalmers, also, concurs in the same view. "The new settlers," he adds, "continued, to the age of Bede, to be commonly called from the original district (in Ireland) the Dalreudini, though they will be herein denominated the Scoto-Irish."—*Caledonia*, vol i. book ii. chap. 6.

But the most ancient testimony of the Scots of North Britain to the descent of their kings from the royal Irish race or Conary, is to be found in a Gaelic Duan, or Poem, written by the court bard of Malcolm III. about A. D. 1057,) which has been pronounced the most ancient monument of Dalriadic history remaining. For this very curious genealogical poem, see Ogyg. Vind. chap. x. Rer. Hibern. Script. prol. i. Pinkerton's Inquiry, part iv. chap. 5.

¶ According to O'Flaherty, this division of the kingdom continued in reality but a year;—"in reputation, however," says Harris, "it subsists among the Irish to this day."

istence beyond his own life-time. To his munificence and love of learning the country was indebted, it is said, for the foundation of three Academies at Tara: in the first of which the science of war was taught; in the second, historical literature; while the third academy was devoted to the cultivation of jurisprudence. It was a remarkable tribute to the powerful influences of literature (if the learning of the Fileas and Seanachies may be dignified with that name,) that the various schemes of state reform brought forward by these legislators all commenced with the reformation of the Literary Order. Among the rest, the monarch Cormac, who was himself a distinguished ornament of that class, applied his earliest care to the correcting of those abuses which had, in the course of time, deteriorated its spirit. Under his auspices, too, a general revision of the annals of the kingdom was entered upon; and the national records which, since the days of the illustrious Ollamh, had been kept regularly, it is said, in the Psalter of Tara, received such corrections and improvements as the growth of knowledge since that remote period must have suggested. It is even alleged that, in the course of this reign, which introduced that mode of ascertaining the dates of regal successions, called Synchronism, which consists in collating the times of the respective reigns with those of contemporary Princes in other countries. This form of chronology was adopted also by an Irish historian of the eleventh century, named Flann, whose annals, formed upon this principle, are said to be still extant in the valuable library at Stowe. It is, however, not easy to conceive, that so general a knowledge of foreign history as this task of synchronizing seems necessary to imply, and which, even in writers so late as Tigernach and Flann,* is sufficiently remarkable, could have been found among a people so entirely secluded from most of the other European nations, as were the Irish in the time of their King Cormac.

The abdication of the supreme power by this monarch, in the full vigour of his age and faculties, was the consequence, it appears, of an ancient law or custom of the country, which forbade that any one who was affected with a personal blemish should hold possession of the throne; and as, in resisting a rebellious attack on his palace, he incurred the loss of an eye,† this accomplished monarch was thereby disqualified from longer retaining the sovereignty. In the law thus enforced may be observed another instance, rather remarkable, of coincidence with the rules and customs of the East. In a like manner, we read in the Persian history, that the son of the monarch Kobad, having by a singular accident lost the use of an eye, was in consequence precluded, by an old law of the country, from all right of succession to the throne.

The nature of the religious opinions held by this monarch have been made a subject of some discussion; and the reverend librarian of Stowe has thought it no waste of his learned leisure to devote a distinct chapter to the consideration of "the Religion of King Cormac." By some writers it is alleged, that he was converted to Christianity seven years before his death; being, it is added, the third person in Ireland who professed that faith before the coming of St. Patrick. That this prince was enlightened enough to reject the superstitions of the Druids, and that, in consequence of his free thinking on such subjects, he had that powerful body opposed to him throughout the whole of his reign, there appears little reason to doubt; but whether he substituted any purer form of faith for that which he had repudiated, is a point not so easily ascertained. A circumstance recorded of him, however, shows how vigorously he could repress intolerance and cruelty, even when directed against a body of religionists to whom he was himself opposed. Among the ancient institutions of Tara was a sort of College of Sacred Virgins, whose vocation it appears to have been, like the Dryads or fortune-tellers among the Gauls, to divine the future for the indulgence of the superstitious or the credulous. In one of those incursions, or forays, of which the territory of the monarch was so often the

* Flanus Junior, Flann. *Mainistreach* cognominatus, cuius *Synchrona* pariter extant in vetusto codice membraneo ejusdem Bibliothecæ, No. i. quique obiit anno 1056, plura itidem subministravit, quibus traditio historica auctoritate cœtanea fulcitur.—*Rer. Hibern. Script. Ep. Nunc.*

A list of no less than fourteen poems attributed to this synchronist, who is known also by the title of Flann of Bute, is given, in Mr. O'Reilly's chronological list of Irish writers, as being still preserved in the Book of Leacan, in the O'Cleary's Book of Invasions, and other such collections.

† We find this accident otherwise accounted for, in a curious narrative, containing some picturesque circumstances, which General Vallancey gives as a translation from an old Irish law book. Ceallach Mac-Cormac, a kinsman, as it appears, of the monarch, having carried away by force, the niece of another Irish chieftain, the latter, determined to take revenge for the insult, hurried to Tara, the royal residence, where the offender was then a guest. "He made directly towards Tara," says the MS., "where he arrived after sunset. Now, there was a law prohibiting any person from coming armed into Tara after sunset, so he went unarmed, and, taking down Cormac's spear from the place where it hung in the hall of Tara, he killed Ceallach Mac-Cormac on the spot, and drawing back the spear with great force, the ferrol stuck out Cormac's eye, and wounded the Reactaire, or Judge of Tara, in the back, of which he died."—*Fragment of the Brehon Laws.*

object, the place where these holy Druidesses resided,* and which bore the name of "The Retreat until Death," was attacked by the troops of the King of Leinster, and the whole of its sacred inmates, together with their handmaids, most inhumanly massacred.† This brutal sacrilege the monarch punished by putting twelve of the Lagenian chieftains most concerned in it to death, and exacting rigorously the Boarian tribute from the province to which they belonged.

In the course of this reign considerable additions are said to have been made to that body of laws, or legal axioms, which had been, from time to time, compiled, under the name of Celestial Judgments; and, among other contributors to this great legislative work, is mentioned Finn Mac-Cumhal—or, as known to modern ears, Fingal—the son-in-law to the monarch Cormac, and general of the famed Fianna Eirinn, or ancient Irish militia. It has been the fate of this popular Irish hero, after a long course of traditional renown in his own country, where his name still lives, not only in legends and songs, but in the yet more indelible record of scenery connected with his memory,‡ to have been, at once, transferred by adoption to another country, and start, under a new but false shape, in a fresh career of fame. Besides being himself an illustrious warrior and bard, this chief transmitted also to his descendants, Oisin and Osgar, the gifts of heroism and song; and died, by the lance, as we are told, of an assassin, in the year 273.

In the humble abode where King Cormac passed his latter days,—a thatched cabin, as it is said, at Aicill, or Kells,§—he produced those works which entitle his name to a place in the list of Royal Authors. "The Advice to a King," which he wrote for the instruction of his son, Carbre, on resigning to him the throne, is said to have been extant so late as the seventeenth century;‖ as well as a poem likewise attributed to him, on the virtues of the number Three,—somewhat resembling, most probably, the Gryphus of the poet Ausonius on the same mysterious subject.

Among the remarkable events that passed during the reign of this monarch, it is worthy of mention that, after having defeated the Ultonians, in a great battle at Granard, he banished numbers of the people of that province to the Isle of Man and the Hebrides. That the island of Eubonia, as Man was then called, belonged in early times to Ireland, appears from Ptolemy, by whom it is marked as a dependency of that country; and, in a work attributed to the cosmographer Æthicus, we are told, "The Isle of Man, as well as Hibernia, is inhabited by tribes of the Scots."¶ In the time of St. Patrick it was still an Irish island, and the favourite resort of such holy persons as wished to devote themselves to a life of seclusion and prayer.

It was in the reign of Carbre, the son and successor of Cormac, that the famous Fianna Eirinn, or Militia of Erin, whose achievements formed so often the theme of our ancient romances and songs, was, in consequence of the dissensions within its own body, as well as of the formidable degree of power which it had attained, put down summarily by force. This national army had been for some time divided into two rival septs, the Clanna Boisgne, commanded by Oisin, the son of Finn, and the Clanna Morna, which was at

* "Dryades erant Gallicanæ mulieres fatidicæ."—*Salmas. in Lamprid.* "Dicebat quodem tempore Aurelianum Gallicanas consuluisse Dryadas."—*Vopisc. in Aurel.* We have Toland's authority for their having been of Druidesses in Ireland; and Gealcossa's Mount, as he tells us, situated in Inisowen, in the county of Donegal, was so called from a female Druid of that name. "Her name," he adds, "is of the Homerical strain, signifying The White-legged. On this hill is her grave, and hard by is her temple, being a sort of diminutive Stonehenge, which many of the old Irish dare not, even at this day, any way profane."—*Letters to Lord Molesworth.*

† Annal. IV. Magist. ad ann. 241.

‡ "I must not omit that, in the centre of this county (the county of Donegal,) the cloud-capt mountain of Alt Ossoin presides, and around him is the whole scenery of Ossian and Fingal, which has been so beautifully described by Mr. Macpherson, and to the northward of Lough Dearg are the mountains, caverns, and lakes of Finn, or Fingal."—*Collectan. de Reb. Hibern.* No. xii.

A writer in the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy (vol. xv.,) mentions a great rock in the county of Meath, under shelter of which Finn and his faithful wolf-dog, Brann, once rested from the chase; and it is added that on the top of the hill of Shanthamon, in the county of Cavan, may be seen his "Fingers," in the shape of five enormous stones, each about five feet high, and of four tons weight. A similar tribute has been paid to our Irish heroes by that country of poesy and song which has adopted them as her own. "All over the Highlands," says Sir John Sinclair (Dissert. on the Authenticity, &c.,) the names of Ossian, Fingal, Combal, Trenmor, Cuchullin, are still familiar, and held in the greatest respect. Straths or valleys, mountains, rocks, rivers, are named after them. There are a hundred places in the Highlands and Isles which derive their name from the Feinne, and from circumstances connected with their history."

§ In his first version, from an Irish MS., of the details of the accident by which Cormac lost his eye, General Vallancey printed and published the following sentence; "But the famous Aicill performed a cure for his eye." Finding, subsequently, however, that Aicill was not a physician, but a small town in the county of Meath, he thus corrected the passage; "Cormac was sent to Aicill to be cured." This mistake of the great Irish scholar has been made the subject of some dull facetiousness in Doctor Campbell's Strictures, Sect. 3.

‖ Bishop Nicholson has, by an oversight, transferred both this work and the son for whom it was written, to Cormac Mac-Cuillenan, the Royal Compiler of the Psalter of Cashel, who died in the beginning of the tenth century. The confusion is carried still farther by representing the latter also as having died in "a thatched house at Anachiul, in Ceananus near Tara."—*Hist. Lib. Appendix.*

¶ "Hibernia a Scotorum gentibus colitur.—Menavia insula æque ac Hibernia a Scotorum gentibus habitatur."—*Cosmog.*

this time protected by the King of Munster; and the rights claimed by the former sept, to take precedence of all other military tribes, had been long a source of violent feuds between their respective chieftains. A celebrated contention of this nature between Goll and Finn Mac-Cumhal, near the palace of the latter at Almhain,* had risen to such a height that it could only be appeased, we are told, by the intervention of the bards, who, shaking the Chain of Silence between the chiefs, succeeded in calming their strife.† To such a pitch, however, had the presumption of the Clanna Boisgne at length arrived, that in the reign of Carbre, having had the audacity to defy the throne itself, they were attacked by the united force of almost all the royal troops of the kingdom (the King of Munster alone taking part with the rebellious Fians,) and a battle, memorable for its extent of carnage, ensued, in which Osgar, the son of Oisin, or Ossian, was slain by the monarch's own hand, and scarcely a man of the Clanna Boisgne escaped the slaughter of that day. The victorious monarch, too, surviving but a short time his dreadful combat with Osgar, was himself numbered among the slain.

The fame of this fatal battle of Gabhra, and the brave warriors who fell in it, continued long to be a favourite theme of the Irish bards and romancers; and upon no other foundation than the old songs respecting the heroes of this combat, mixed up with others relating to chieftains of a still more ancient date, has been raised that splendid fabric of imposture which, under the assumed name of Ossian, has for so long a period dazzled and deceived the world;‡ being not more remarkable for the skill and fancy displayed in its execution than for the intrepidity with which its author presumed on the general ignorance and credulity of his readers.

The close connexion of this work of Macpherson with the History of Ireland, as well as of North Britain, at this period, and the false views which it is meant to convey of the early relations between the two countries, demand for it a degree of notice in these pages to which, as a mere work of fiction, however brilliant, it could not have any claim. Such notice, too, appears the more called for, from the circumstance of this fabrication forming but one of a long series of attempts, on the part of Scottish writers, to confound and even reverse the historical affinities between the two countries, for the purpose of claiming, as the property of Scotland, not only those high heroic names and romantic traditions which belong to the twilight period of Irish history we are now considering, but also the most distinguished of those numerous saints and scholars, who are known, at a later and more authentic period, to have illustrated our annals. This notable scheme, to which the community of the name of Scotia between the two countries afforded peculiar facilities, commenced so early as the thirteenth century, when, on the claim advanced by Edward I. to a feudal superiority over Scotland, it became an object with the people of that country to assert the independency of the Scotish crown, and when for the first time pretensions were set up by them to a scheme of antiquities of their own, partly borrowed from that of the parent country, but chiefly intended to supersede and eclipse it.

The pretensions but faintly sketched out at that crisis, assumed, in the hands of succeeding chroniclers, a more decided shape; till at length, with the aid of the forged authorities brought forward by Hector Boece,§ an addition of from forty to five-and-forty Scotish kings were at once interpolated in the authentic Irish list of the Dalriadic rulers; by which means the commencement of the Scotish kingdom in Britain was removed from its true historical date,—about the beginning, as we shall see, of the sixth century,—to as far back as three hundred and thirty years before the Incarnation.

It is worthy of remark, too, that far more in political objects and designs than in any romantic or vain-glorious ambition, is to be found the source of most of these efforts on the part of the Scotch to construct for themselves this sort of spurious antiquity. We have seen that the first notions of such a scheme arose out of the claims set up by Edward I. to a right of superiority over Scotland; and as the English monarch had backed his pretensions by reference to a long line of kings, through which he professed to have descended

* "Situated in Leinster, on the summit of Allen, or rather, as the natives of that country pronounce it, Allowin. The village and bog of Allen have thence derived their name. There are still the remains of some trenches on the top of the hill where Fin Mac Cumhal and his Fians were wont to celebrate their feasts."—*Dr. Young, Trans. Irish Acad.*

† "The Book of Howth affirms that, in the battle between the Fenii and Carbre, the Fenii were all destroyed, Oisin excepted; and that he lived till the time of St. Patrick, to whom he related the exploits of the Fenii."—*Relics of Irish Poetry.* See also *Walker's Irish Bards.* "It would be tedious," adds Miss Brooke, "to relate the various causes assigned by different writers for this battle. Historians, in general, lay the chief blame upon the Fenii; and the poets, taking part with their favourite heroes, cast the odium upon Carbre, then monarch of Ireland. The fault, most likely, was mutual."

‡ "There are at least three Poems, of considerable antiquity, in Irish, written on the battle of Gabhra, upon which Mr. Macpherson founded his poem of 'Temora.'"—*Essay to investigate the Authenticity, &c.*, by Edward O'Reilly, Esq.

§ Innes acquits his countryman Boece of having been himself the author of this forgery.—Ch. ii. art. ii. § 8.

from Brutus, Locrine, Albanact, &c., the Scotch, in their counter-memorials,* deemed it politic to have recourse to a similar parade of antiquity, and brought forward, for the first time, their additional supply of ancient kings, to meet the exigencies of the occasion. In like manner, when, at a later period, their eloquent Buchanan lent all the attractions of his style to adorn and pass into currency the absurd legends of Hector Boece respecting the forty kings, it was not that he conceived any glory or credit could redound to his country from such forgeries,† but because the examples he found in these pretended records of the deposition and punishment of kings by their subjects, fell in with the principles at that time afloat respecting the king-deposing power, and afforded precedents for that right of revolt against tyranny which he had himself so strenuously and spiritedly advocated.‡

From this period the boasted antiquities of the British Scots were suffered to slumber undisturbed, till, on the appearance of the work of the Bishop of St. Asaph, entitled, an Historical Account of Ancient Church Government in Great Britain and Ireland, when that learned prelate, having occasion to notice the fabricated succession of Scotish kings from an imaginary Fergus I., exposed the falsehood and utter absurdity of the whole fable. This simple historical statement called forth a champion of the forty phantom kings, in the person of Sir George Mackenzie, the King's Advocate for Scotland, who, resenting warmly, as "a degree of leze-majesté," this curtailment of the royal line, went so far as to identify the honour and safety of the British monarchy with the credit of the fabulous kings of Boece.§ It is, indeed, not a little curious to observe, that while political views and objects continued to be the motive of most of this zeal for the antiquities of their country, the ground taken by the Scotish champions was now completely changed; and whereas, Boece, and, far more knowingly, Buchanan, had supported the forgery of the forty kings for the sake of the weapons which it had furnished them against the sacredness of hereditary monarchy, Sir George Mackenzie, on the contrary, overlooking, or rather, perhaps, not acknowledging this alleged tendency of the Scotish fictions, upheld them as so essentially connected with the very foundations of the British monarchy, that to endeavour to bring them into any disrepute was, in his eyes, a species of high treason.

The masterly hand of Bishop Stillingfleet gave the last blow to that shadowy fabric of which Sir George Mackenzie had proved himself but a feeble defender; and the pretensions of the Scots to a high line of antiquity, independent of that of their ancestors, the Irish, fell, never again to rise in the same ostensible shape. But there remained another mode of undermining the Scotic history of Ireland, or rather of confounding it with that of the Scotia derived from her, so as to transfer to the offspring much of the parent's fame; and of this Macpherson, with much ingenuity, and a degree of hardihood almost without parallel, availed himself. Counting upon the obscurity of Irish history at the commencement of the Christian era, he saw that a supposed migration of Caledonians into that country in the first century, would not only open to him a wide and safe field for the fanciful creations he meditated, but would also be the means of appropriating to his own country the romantic fame of those early heroes and bards, those traditional subjects of story and song, which are, after all, more fondly clung to by every ancient people, than even their most authentic and most honourable history.

It is true this adoption and appropriation by the British Scots, of the songs and traditions of the Irish, had been carried on for ages before the period when it was so expertly turned to account by Macpherson; being the natural result of the intimate intercourse so long subsisting between the two countries. The original fragments, indeed, of Erse poetry, which formed the foundation of most of his Epics, were, in fact, but versions of

* These memorials, which were addressed to the Pope, are to be found in Hearne's edition of Fordun. "Those productions of the Scots (says Innes,) I mean as to their remote antiquities, ought to be considered such as they truly were, as the pleadings of advocates, who commonly make no great difficulty to advance with great assurance all that makes for the advantage of their cause or clients, though they have but probable grounds, and sometimes bare conjectures to go upon."—*Critical Essay.*

† It is but fair to observe, that by none of these writers was so bold a defiance of the voice of history ventured upon as to deny that the Scots of Albany had originally passed over from Ireland. Even Sir George Mackenzie, who endeavours to set aside the relationship as much as possible, says,—"We acknowledge ourselves to have come last from Ireland;" while of all those Scotish writers who preceded him in the same track, John Major, Hector Boece, Leslie, Buchanan, not a single one has thought of denying that the Scots were originally of Irish extraction. See *Ogygia Vindicated*, chap. 3.

‡ In his work *De Jure regni apud Scotos.*

§ See his letter to the lord chancellor, wherein Sir George "admires that any of the subjects of Great Britain did not think it a degrees of lese-majesty to injure and shorten the royal line of their kings."

In speaking of the Scoto-Irish chiefs of Argyleshire, Sir Walter Scott says, (Hist. of Scotland, vol. i. ch. 2.) "Not to incur the charge of leze-majesté, brought by Sir G. Mackenzie against Dr. Stillingfleet, for abridging the royal pedigree by some links, we will briefly record that, by the best authorities, twenty-eight of these Dalriadic kings or chiefs reigned successively in Argyleshire." It was, however, not in reference to the Dalriadic kings that Sir George's remark was made, nor was it directed against Stillingfleet, but against Lloyd, the learned Bishop of St. Asaph.

old Irish songs relating to the Fenian heroes,* which, though attributed to the poet Oisin, were the productions of bards of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and, finding their way among the highlanders of Britain, from the close connexion between the two countries, came, in the course of time, to be adopted by them, both heroes and songs, as their own.†

The various adaptations and corruptions of the original ballads by which this process of naturalization was effected, and the chieftains Finn, Oisin, Osgar, Cuchullin, Goll Mac-Morn were all in the Erse songs converted into Highland heroes, have been pointed out by critics familiar with the dialects of both countries; and though some of the variations from the original ballads arose, doubtless, from the want of a written standard, there occur others—such as the omission frequently of the name of Ireland, and of St. Patrick—which could have arisen from no other cause than a deliberate intention to deceive.‡

In all such prepense modes of falsification, Macpherson improved boldly on his rude originals;§ though still with so little regard to consistency, as often to justify the suspicion, that his great success was owing fully as much to the willingness of others to be deceived, as to his own talent in deceiving. The conversion of Finn, an Irish chieftain of the third century, into a Caledonian "King of Morven," and the chronological blunder of giving him Cuchullin for a contemporary, who had flourished more than two centuries before, are errors, which, gross as they are, might, under cover of the darkness of Irish history, at that period, have been expected to pass unnoticed. But his representing this Finn, or Fingal, as in the year 208 commanding the Caledonians against Caracalla,‖ and then bringing him forward again, at the interval of more than a century, to contend with Cathmor in single combat, is one of those daring flights of improbability and absurdity, upon which none but a writer so conscious of his own powers of imposture could have ventured.¶

* For the best account of these Fenian Poems, and of the general nature of their style and subjects, the reader is referred to an able essay on the authenticity of Ossian's Poems, by Dr. William Hamilton Drummond, in the 16th volume of the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy. A MS. collection of the Fenian tales and songs is said to be in the possession of Mr. James Hardiman, the intelligent author of the History of Galway.

† Even among the Lowlanders, too, the traditional renown of Finn and his heroes had long made itself known, as the following instance proves:—When Bruce was defeated by MacDougal, Lord of Lorn, he placed himself in the rear of his retreating followers, and checked the pursuit. "Behold him," said MacDougal to one of his leaders, "he protects his followers against us, as Gaul, the son of Morni, defended his tribe against the rage of Fingal."—Quoted from Barbour, in an article of the Edinburgh Review, (attributed, I believe justly, to the pen of Sir Walter Scott,) on the Report of the Highland Society, vol. vi. That the true birthplace, however, of Finn and his heroes was sometimes acknowledged even in Scotland, appears from two verses, quoted in the same article, from the old Scotch poet Douglas:

"Great Gow MacMorn, and Fin MacCoul, and how
They suld be Goddis in Ireland, as men say."

Neither were the English ignorant of our claims to these ancient heroes and bards, as may be seen from the following passage quoted by Camden, in speaking of the Irish:—"They think the souls of the deceased are in communion with famous men of those places, of whom they retain many stories and sonnets, as of the giants Fin MacHuyle, O'Shin MacOwen; and they say, through illusion, that they often see them."

The origin of the addition of the word Gal to Finn's name is thus satisfactorily explained: *Gal*, the latter part of the compound, signifies a *stranger;* and being applied by Scotchmen to Fin, the son of Cumhal, it affords a decisive proof that they did not consider him as their countryman."—*Essay on Ossian, by the Rev. Dr. Drummond.*

‡ Of one of these Erse Poems, a Conversation between Ossian and St. Patrick, Dr. Young says:—"The Highland Sgeulaichea have been very busy in corrupting this poem, partly of necessity from the want of a written standard ..... From their vain desire of attributing Fin Mac-Cumhal and his heroes to Scotland, they seem to have intentionally corrupted it in some passages, as may be seen by comparing the Erse copies with each other. Thus, in the verse before us, the word Ireland is omitted." Again Dr. Young remarks:—"The Highland Sgeulaichea have taken the liberty of totally perverting this stanza, and changing it into another, which might make Fin Mac-Cumhal their own countryman."

§ The late Dr. Young, Bishop of Clonfert, who, in the year 1784, made a tour to the Highlands of Scotland, for the purpose of seeing the original poems from which Macpherson had constructed his Epics, has accused him of altering the dates of his originals, of attributing to them a much higher antiquity than belongs to them, of suppressing the name of St. Patrick, and, in short, of corrupting and falsifying, by every means, even the few scanty fragments of Irish poetry he could produce to sanction his imposture.

‖ See Gibbon's detection of the anachronism of Macpherson respecting Caracalla, (vol. i. ch. 6.) where, however, he expresses himself with a degree of deference and timidity well deserving of Hume's rebuke to him on his credulity. "You are therefore," says his shrewd friend, "over and above indulgent to us in speaking of the matter with hesitation."

¶ The primary and insurmountable argument against even the possibility of their authenticity, is thus well stated by Hume:—"It is, indeed, strange that any man of sense could have imagined it possible that above twenty thousand verses, along with numberless historical facts, could have been preserved by oral tradition during fifty generations, by the rudest, perhaps, of all the European nations, the most necessitous, the most turbulent, and the most unsettled. Where a supposition is so contrary to common sense, any positive evidence of it ought never to be regarded."—Letter to Gibbon, in *Gibbon's Memoirs of his own Life and Writings.*

So slow, however, has the delusion been in passing away, that so late as the year 1825, when Armstrong's Gaelic Dictionary was published, we find the author of that work boasting of Ossian, as "the great poet of the Gael," and citing him as authority for the early manners and customs of the Highlanders.

It is true that, in most of those poems, attributed to our bard Oisin, which furnished the grounds, or rather pretext, for the elaborate forgeries of Macpherson, the very same license of anachronism is found to prevail. The son of Finn, in these rude and spurious productions, has not only his life prolonged as far as the fifth century for the convenience of conversing with St. Patrick, but finds himself engaged, so late as the commencement of the twelfth, in single combat with the Norwegian king, Magnus. It is to be remembered, however, that these vagaries of chronology occur in detached pieces of poetry, written by different authors, and at different periods; whereas, the pretended epics of Ossian are the production professedly of one great and known poet, at a defined period of history; and yet, in the very face of this assumed character, abound with such monstrous anachronisms, such utter confusion of times, places, persons, and manners as renders the belief, for so long a period, in the authenticity of such a work, one of the most startling marvels in all literary history.

To mention but two or three more instances in which this personator of a bard of the third century forestalls the manners and customs of a far later period, we find him bestowing on his Irish heroes, some centuries before the coat of mail was introduced, bright *corslets* of steel,* and describing castles as existing in Ireland, at a time when the most stately palaces of her kings were as yet constructed but of wood. In still more wanton defiance both of history and common sense, he brings together the expedition of Caracalla at the commencement of the third century, that of Carausius at its close, and the invasions of the Danes and Norwegians, in the ninth and tenth centuries, as all of them contemporary events.

Not content with the many violations of chronology that have been mentioned, the pretended translator of Ossian takes no less liberties both with geography and topography, transporting Moylena, for instance, the scene of two famous battles, from the King's County to Ulster, and transferring even Teamor, or Tara, the celebrated residence of the ancient monarchs, from its natural site in Meath to the same northern province.† While thus lavishing upon Ulster glories that do not belong to it, he has, on the other hand, robbed it of some peculiarly its own; and passing in silence over the memorable Emania, the seat of the old Ultonian kings, he has chosen to substitute some castle of Tura, his own invention, in its place. Instead of Craove-Roe, too, the military school of the Red-Branch Knights, near Emania, he has called up some structure, under the exotic name of Muri's Hall, which is no less the baseless fabric of his own fancy than the castle of Tura.‡

It may be thought that animadversions of this nature upon a romance still so popular, belong more properly to the department of criticism than of history. But a work which Gibbon, in tracing the fortunes of Imperial Rome, has turned aside from his stately march to notice, may well lay claim to some portion of attention from the humble historian of the country to which all the Chiefs so fabulously commemorated by it, in reality belonged. Had the aim of the forgery been confined to the ordinary objects of romance, namely, to delight and interest, any such grave notice of its anachronisms and inconsistencies would have been here misplaced. But the imposture of Macpherson was, at the least, as much historical as poetical. His suppression, for it could hardly have been ignorance,§ of the true history of the Irish settlement in Argyleshire, so early as the middle of the third century,—a fact fatal to the whole groundwork of his pretended Scottish history,—could have proceeded only from a deliberate system of deception, having for its object so far to reverse the historical relationship between the two countries, as to make Scotland the

* "The Irish annalists speak of the Danes in the latter end of the eighth century, as being covered with armour; but they never speak of the Irish troops being so equipped. Giraldus Cambrensis describes particularly the arms of the Irish, but says not one word of their wearing armour."—*Essay upon Ossian, by Edward O'Reilly. Esq.*

† For a more detailed exposure of these, and many other such blunders, see Dissertation on the First Migrations and Final Settlement of the Scots in North Britain, by Mr. O'Connor, of Belanagare.

‡ The fortress of Tura is, indeed, mentioned by Mr. Beauford, who as an authority, however, is of little more value than Macpherson himself:—"In the neighbourhood of Cromla," says this writer, "stood the rath or fortress of Tura, called by the Irish writers Alich Neid."—*Ancient Topography of Ireland.*

§ Some of his own countrymen think more charitably of him:—"Above all," says a writer already referred to, "Macpherson was ignorant of the real history of the colony of the Dalriada, or Irish Scots, who possessed themselves of a part of Argyleshire, in the middle of the third century; an indubitable fact, inconsistent with his whole system."—*Edinburgh Review*, vol. xvi., *Report of the Highland Society.* We are, however, justified in imputing to Macpherson something much worse than ignorance, when, in works professedly historical and argumentative, we find him falling into the same disingenuous practices, and not hesitating to alter, suppress or falsify, according as it suited his immediate purpose. Of all this he is proved to have been guilty in his Introduction to the History of Great Britain and Ireland. "The total omission," says his opponent, "of some expressions that must have disproved the application of the passages, the careful discharge of all hostile words from the quotations, and the officious interpolation of friendly in their room—facts that appear evident upon the face of the extracts above—certainly give an unhappy aspect of disingenuousness to the whole, and may seem to discredit the integrity and honour of Mr. Macpherson."—*Genuine History of the Britons Asserted*, chap. i.

sole source of all those materials for poetry which she had in reality derived through colonization from Ireland.

The weight given to these compositions, as historical evidences, by the weak credulity with which they were at first received, has now long passed away. But it ought never, in recording the "follies of the wise," to be forgotten that the critical Blair believed implicitly in the genuineness of these rhapsodies; and that by two grave historians, Henry and Whitaker, they have been actually referred to as authentic historical documents; the former having made use of their authority in illustrating the early poetry of the Britons, while the latter, in his account of the expedition of the emperor Severus into North Britain, makes up for the silence of all the ancient historians, as to its details, by some important particulars derived from the authentic page of the Bard of Selma; informing us that Fingal, who was at that time, as it seems, the Pendragon of Caledonia, negotiated a peace with the Romans,* upon the banks of the river Carron. With the same ludicrous seriousness, in relating the events of the naval expedition, under Niall Giallach, against the coasts of Britain, he describes the movements of the numerous navy of the ancient Irish, the boatmen singing to the chime of their oars, and the music of the harp,—the shield of the admiral hung upon the mast, "a sufficient mark of itself in the day, and frequently beat as a signal at night,"—all upon the joint authority of the poets, Claudian and Ossian!

In one point of view, the imposture has not been unserviceable to the cause of historical truth, inasmuch as, by directing public attention to the subject, it has led to a more correct and more generally diffused knowledge of the early relations between Scotland and Ireland, and rendered impossible, it is to be hoped, any recurrence of that confusion between the annals of the two countries,—that mist thrown purposely, in many instances, around their early connexion,—in which alone such antiquarian pretensions and historical fictions as those of Fordun, Hector Boece, Dempster, and lastly, Macpherson himself, could have hoped to escape detection. The spirit of inquiry, too, that was awakened by so long a course of controversy, has proved favourable no less to the literary than to the historical claims of ancient Ireland; as it was found that, in her songs and romances, which had been adopted by the Scots of Britain, as well as her heroes, lay the groundwork, however scanty, of this modern fabric of fiction; that, so far from her descendants, the Scots of Albany, having any pretensions to an original literature or distinct school of poesy, there had never existed, among the Highlanders, any books but Irish;† and while the scholars of Ireland could boast of manuscripts in their own tongue, near a thousand years old, it was not till so late as the year 1778 that even a Grammar of the Erse dialect of the Gaelic was in existence.

It has been already mentioned, that between the Irish and the first inhabitants of North Britain there had commenced an intercourse at a very early period. According to all accounts, the ancient Pictish colony that finally fixed themselves in Britain, had, on their way to that country, rested for a time in Ireland, and had been provided from thence, at their own request, with wives. The friendship founded upon this early connexion was kept alive by continued intercourse between the two nations; and though the footing the Irish obtained in the third century upon the western coast of North Britain, produced a jealousy which sometimes disturbed, and, even at one period, endangered this small colony,‡ the advantage derived by both nations from such an alliance, kept their fierce and feverish union unbroken. In addition to the pride which Ireland naturally felt in the task of watching over and nursing into vigour that germ of future dominion which she had planted in North Britain, her kings and princes, eternally at war with each other, as naturally looked beyond their own shores for allies; and, accordingly, as in the instance of the monarch Tuathal, who owed his throne to the aid of Pictish arms, we

* History of Manchester, book i. chap. xii. sect. 2.

† "It might boldly be averred that the Irish, who have written a host of grammars, did not derive their prosody from the Caledonians, who, till within these thirty years, had never possessed so much as the skeleton of a national grammar."—*Davies's Claims of Ossian.* Dr. Ferguson, too, in his communication to the Highland Society, admits that there were "no books in the Gaelic language but the manuals of religion; and these in so awkward and clumsy a spelling, that few could read them."

‡ According to some writers, almost the whole of this Irish colony, reduced to extremity by the constant attacks of the Picts, were compelled, in the middle, it is said, of the fifth century, (about fifty years before the establishment of the Scotic kingdom in North Britain,) to abandon their possessions in Argyleshire, and take flight to Ireland, where they found a refuge in the hereditary territory of the Dalriadic princes. Neither in Tigernach, however, nor in the Annals of the Four Masters, does there occur any mention of such an event, which seems to depend wholly upon the authority of the Scotish writers, Major, Boece, Buchanan, &c., whose misrepresentation of most of the other facts connected with the event, renders them but suspicious testimonies on the subject of the Dalriadic settlement. Mr. O'Connor, however, has adopted the same unauthorized view. "The British Dalriada," he states, "was exercised by frequent hostilities from the Cruthneans, and, at one period, with so good success, that they forced almost the whole colony to take flight into Ireland, under their leader, Eochad Munrevar, who found a secure retreat for his followers in the Irish Dalriada."—*Dissert. on Hist. of Scotland.*

find the alliance of that people frequently resorted to as a means of turning the scale of internal strife. On the other hand, the hardy highlanders of Caledonia, in the constant warfare they waged with their southern neighbours, were no less ready to resort to the assistance of a people fully as restless and pugnacious as themselves, and whose manners and habits, from a long course of connexion, were, it is probable, but little different from their own.

As some defence against the incursions of these two hostile tribes, the Romans had, at different intervals during the second and third centuries, erected those three great walls or ramparts on the northern frontier of their province, whose remains still continue to occupy the curious research and speculation of the antiquary. But the hostility of these highlanders had, at the period of which we are now treating, assumed a still more audacious and formidable character; and, about the middle of the fourth century, so destructive had become their inroads, that it required the presence of the son of Constantine, to make head against and repel them. Whatever differences their relative position, as rival neighbours, had given rise to, were entirely merged in their common object of harassing the Britons, whom a native historian describes as trembling with the fear of a new visitation, while still fainting from the dire effects of the tempest which had just swept over them.

To deliver the province from this scourge, one of the bravest of the Roman generals, Theodosius, was now appointed to the military command of Britain; and after two active campaigns, during which he had to contend, not only with the Picts and Scots by land, but also with their new allies, the Saxon pirates, by sea, he at length succeeded in delivering Britain from her inveterate invaders. To such daring lengths had some of these incursions into her territory extended, that, on the arrival of the Roman general, he had found the Picts and their allies advanced as far as London and Kent.* In all this warfare the Scots of Ireland were no less active than their brethren of Albany; and it is, therefore, remarkable that the Roman commander, though fitting out a fleet to chastise the Saxons in the Orcades, should yet have left Ireland, whose currachs wafted over such hostile swarms to his shores, still exempt from invasion. That his fleet chased, however, some of her vessels into their own northern harbours, may be concluded from a passage of the poem of Claudian, which commemorates this war:—

"Nec falso nomine Pictos
Edomuit, Scotumque vago mucrone secutus,
Fregit Hyperboreas remis audacibus undas."

The few following lines from the same poem describe, briefly and picturesquely, the signal triumph over the three hostile nations which Theodosius had achieved:—

"Maduerunt Saxone fuso
Orcades, incaluit Pictorum sanguine Thule,
Scotorum cumulos flevit glacialis Ierne."

From this period there occurs nothing very remarkable in the course of Irish affairs till about the beginning of the fourth century, when the violent usurpation of the sovereign throne by Huas Colla, one of three brothers bearing the same name, produced a long series of tumultuous and sanguinary scenes. The battle, in which the rightful monarch, Fiach, lost his crown and his life to the usurper, is distinguished among the countless fields of carnage upon record, by the title of the Battle of Dubcomar; from the circumstance of the monarch's favourite Druid of that name having been among the number of the slain. This and other such known instances of Druidical warriors, show that justly as Macpherson has, in general, been accused of giving false pictures of Irish manners, his introduction of "Fighting Druids" is not to be reckoned among the number.† The name of Landerg, or Bloody Hand, affixed by tradition, as we are told, to the Druid who has lived enchanted, it is thought, for ages, in one of the mountains of the county of Donegal, proves the sort of warlike reputation that was attached to some of this priesthood; and we learn from Cæsar, that even so solemn a question as the election of a High Priest used, among the Gaulish Druids, to be decided sometimes by an appeal to arms.

* See Ammian. lib. xxvii. c. 8., who describes them as penetrating "ad Lundinium vetus oppidum, quod Augustam posteritas appellavit."

† O'Reilly's Essay upon Ossian, where this objection is brought forward. "From the very name of Lamderg," says Toland, "we learn what sort of man the Druid was, who, by the vulgar, is thought to live enchanted in the mountain between Buniranach and Fathen, in the county of Donegal." He adds, that the Druids were many of them warriors.

After a reign of five years, the usurper Colla was compelled to abdicate the sovereignty by the rightful successor of the late monarch, Muredach Tiry, and the three Collas took flight, attended by 300 followers, to North Britain.* From thence returning in the course of a year, they found means to conciliate, through the intervention of the Druids, the good-will of the monarch Muredach, and were also by his aid enabled to make war on the King of Ulster, and dispossess him of his dominions. It was in the course of the struggle consequent on this invasion, that the princely palace of Emania, whose construction formed one of the great epochs of Irish chronology, was, after a battle, upon which, we are told, six successive suns went down, destroyed by the victorious army, and not a trace of its long-celebrated glories left behind.

An invasion of Britain, on a far more extensive and formidable scale than had yet been attempted from Ireland, took place towards the close of the fourth century, under the auspices of Nial of the Nine Hostages, one of the most gallant of all the princes of the Milesian race. Observing that the Romans, after breaking up their lines of encampment along the coast opposite to Ireland, had retired to the eastern shore and the northern wall, Nial perceived that an apt opportunity was thus offered for a descent upon the now unprotected territory. Instantly summoning, therefore, all the forces of the island, and embarking them on board such ships as he could collect, he ranged with his numerous navy along the whole coast of Lancashire, effected a landing in Wales, from whence he carried off immense plunder, and, though compelled ultimately to retreat, left marks of depredation and ruin wherever he passed.† It was against the incursions of this adventurous monarch, that some of those successes were achieved by the Romans, which threw such lustre around the military administration of Stilicho, and inspired the muse of Claudian in his praise. "By him," says the poet, speaking in the person of Britannia, "was I protected when the Scot moved all Ireland against me, and the ocean foamed with his hostile oars."‡ From another of this poet's eulogies, it appears that the fame of that Roman legion which had guarded the frontier of Britain against the invading Scots,§ procured for it the distinction of being one of those summoned to the banner of Stilicho, when the Goths threatened Rome.‖

A.D. 396–7.

Joined with the Picts and Scots, in these expeditions, were also another warlike Irish tribe, the Attacots; who, at an earlier period of their country's history, had distinguished themselves by their turbulent bravery; having been the chief movers of those two rebellions known by the name of the Attacottic Wars. The fierce valour of these wild warriors, who, after their settlement in North Britain, inhabited chiefly the districts close to Adrian's Wall, seems to have attracted the especial attention of the Romans, who, acting upon the policy, which proved so fatal to them in the decline of the empire, of incorporating with their own legions, and even with Palatine troops, auxiliaries or deserters from the barbarian camps, succeeded in detaching some of these Attacotti from the Scoto-Pictish league, and enrolling them in the regular force of the empire.¶

* A poem is extant, written in the twelfth century, by Giolla na Naomh O'Dunn, giving "an account of the chief tribes descended from the three Collas, sons of Carbre Leffeachar, monarch of Ireland, who was killed at the battle of Gabhra, A. D. 290."—*Trans. of Ib. Celt. Society.* A manuscript copy of this poem is in the possession of Mr. O'Reilly, the Secretary of the Iberno-Celtic Society.

† "In the days of Stilicho particularly, leaving the country between the Walls to be ravaged by their brethren of Argyle and the Picts, they (the Scots of Ireland) made a descent on the provinces that were inaccessible to them, landed in both of the divisions of Wales, and now, for the first time, possessed themselves of the Island of Man."—*Genuine Hist. of the Britons.*

‡ Totam cum Scotus Iernin
Movit et infesto spumavit remige Tethys.
In I. Cons. Stilich. lib. i.

Thus well translated in the English Camden:—

When Scots came thundering from the Irish shores,
And th' ocean trembled, struck with hostile oars.

§ The following remarks are not the less worthy of being cited for their having come from the pen of a writer who was either so ignorant or so prejudiced as to contend, that the Scots who fought by the side of the Picts against the Romans were not really Irish:—"There can be no greater proof of the Scots never having been conquered, than the very Roman walls themselves, built as fences against their hostilities; which, while there is a stone of them remaining, will be undeniable monuments of the valour and prowess of that nation."—*Gordon, Itinerarium Septentrionale*, chap. xiv.

‖ Venit et extremis Legio prætenta Britannis,
Quæ Scoto dat fræna truci, ferroque notatas
Perlegit exanimes Picto moriente figuras.
De Bello Getico.

¶ In the *Notitia Imperii*, the Attacotti are expressly named. "Procedente tempore cum bellicosos et formidandos Romani invenissent, præmiis propositis et sese auxiliariis adscriberent allexerunt, ideoque Attacottos in Notitia Imperii nominatos invenimus, curante Honorio, ut ex inimicis amici et vacillantis Imperii defensores haberentur."—*Rer. Hibern. Script.*, Prol. I. lxxi.

The tottering state of the Roman dominion in Gaul, as well as in every other quarter, at this period, encouraged the Hero of the Nine Hostages to extend his enterprises to the coast of Britany; where, after ravaging all the maritime districts of the north-west of Gaul, he was at length assassinated, with a poisoned arrow, by one of his own followers, near the Portus Iccius, not far, it is supposed, from the site of the present Boulogne. It was in the course of this predatory expedition that, in one of their descents on the coast of Armoric Gaul, the soldiers of Nial carried off with them, among other captives, a youth, then in his sixteenth year, whom Providence had destined to be the author of a great religious revolution in their country; and whom the strangely fated land to which he was then borne, a stranger and a slave, has now, for fourteen hundred years, commemorated as its great Christian apostle.

An accession of territory was, during this reign, added to the Irish possessions in North Britain; the two sons of Cork, King of Munster, having acquired seigniories in the neighbourhood of the Picts, the one of Levinia, or Lenox; the other, of Moygergin, in Mar, a county of the present Scotland.

To Nial the Great succeeded Dathy, the last of the Pagan monarchs of Ireland, and not unworthy to follow, as a soldier and adventurer, in the path opened to him by his heroic predecessor. Not only, like Nial, did he venture to invade the coasts of Gaul; but, allured by the prospect of plunder, which the state of the province, then falling fast into dismemberment, held forth, forced his way to the foot of the Alps, and was there killed, it is said, by a flash of lightning, leaving the throne of Ireland to be filled thenceforward by a line of Christian kings.

A.D. 406.

CHAPTER VIII.

CREDIBILITY OF THE HISTORY OF PAGAN IRELAND.

Before entering upon the new epoch of Irish history, which is about to open upon us with the introduction of Christianity, a review of the general features of the period over which we have passed may be found not uninteresting or unuseful. With regard to the first and most material question, the authenticity of those records on which the foregoing brief sketch of Pagan Ireland is founded, it is essential, in the first place, to distinguish clearly between what are called the Bardic Historians,—certain metrical writers, who flourished from the ninth to the eleventh century,—and those regular chroniclers or annalists of whom a long series was continued down, there is every reason to believe, from very early ages, and whose successive records have been embodied and transmitted to us in the Annals of Tigernach,* in those of the Four Masters,† of Inisfallen, of Ulster,‡ and many others.§

To the metrical historians above mentioned is to be attributed the credit, if not of originally inventing, at least of amplifying and embellishing, that tale of the Milesian colonization which so many grave and respectable writers have, since their time, adopted. In his zeal for the credit of this national legend, the late learned librarian of Stowe has endeavoured to enlist some of the more early Irish poets in its support.‖ On his own

"The Attacotti make a distinguished figure in the Notitia Imperii, where numerous bodies of them appear in the list of the Roman army. One body was in Illyricum, their ensign a kind of mullet; another at Rome, their badge a circle; the Attacotti Honoriani were in Italy."—*Pinkerton, Inquiry*, part iv. chap. 2.

* In the Annals of the Four Masters for the year 1088, the death of this annalist is thus recorded:—"Tigernach O'Braoin, Comorhan, or Successor of Kieran of Clonmacnois and of St. Coman (*i. e.* Abbot of Clonmacnois and Roscommon,) a learned lecturer and historian."

† Compiled in the seventeenth century, by Michael O'Clery, with the assistance of three other antiquaries, and "chiefly drawn," says Harris, "from the annals of Clonmacnois, Inisfall, and Senat, as well as from other approved and ancient chronicles of Ireland." For a fuller account of the various sources from whence these records were derived, see Mr. Petrie's Remarks on the History and Authenticity of the Autograph Original of the Annals of the Four Masters, now deposited in the library of the R. I. A. Academy.

‡ Published, for the first time, by Dr. O'Connor, from a Bodleian manuscript of the year 1215.

§ A long list of these various books of Annals may be found in Nicholson's Historical Library, chap. 2; also in the preface to Keating's History, xxi.

‖ For the very slight grounds, or, rather, mere pretence of grounds, upon which Dr. O'Connor lays claim to Fiech and Confealad, Irish poets of the sixth and seventh centuries, as authorities for the Milesian story, see, among other passages, Ep. Nunc. xxxiv., Prol. 2. xv. xxvi. Having once claimed them, thus gratuitously, as favouring his views of the subject, he continues constantly after to refer to them, as concurrent authorities

showing, however, it is manifest that in no Irish writings before those of Maolmura,* who died towards the close of the ninth century, are any traces whatever of the Milesian fable to be found.

There appears little doubt, indeed, that to some metrical writers of the ninth century the first rudiments of this wild romance respecting the origin of the Irish people are to be assigned; that succeeding writers took care to amplify and embellish the original sketch; and that in the hands of the author or authors of the Psalter of Cashel,† it assumed that full-blown form of fiction and extravagance in which it has ever since flourished. It is worthy of remark, too, that the same British writer, Nennius, who furnished Geoffry of Monmouth with his now exploded fables of the descent of the Britons from King Brute and the Trojans, was the first also who put forth the tale of the Scythian ancestors of the Irish, and of their coming, in the fourth age of the world, by the way of Africa and Spain, into Hibernia. Having conversed, as he himself tells us, with the most learned among the Scots,‡ and been by them, it is evident, informed of their early traditions respecting a colony from Spain, he was tempted to eke out their genealogy for them by extending it as far as Scythia and the Red Sea, just as he had provided the Britons with Trojan progenitors, under the command of King Brute, from Greece.

To our metrical historians may be assigned also the credit of inventing that specious system of chronology upon which the fabric of their fabled antiquity entirely rests, and which, though well calculated to effect the object of its inventors,—that of carrying back to remote times the date of the Milesian dynasty,—proves them not to have been over-scrupulous in the means they used for that purpose.§ It is, indeed, as I have already, more than once, remarked, far less in the events themselves, than in the remote date assigned to those events, that much of the delusion attributed in general to Irish history lies. The ambition of a name ancient as the world, and the lax, accommodating chronology, which is found ever ready, in the infancy of science, to support such pretensions, has led the Irish, as it has led most other nations, to antedate their own existence and fame.‖

Together with the primitive mode of numbering ages and ascertaining the dates of public events, by the successions of kings and the generations of men, the ancient Irish possessed also a measure of time in their two great annual festivals of Baal and of Samhin, the recurrence of which at certain fixed periods furnished points, in each year, from whence to calculate. How far even History may advance to perfection where no more regular chronology exists, appears in the instance of Thucydides, who was able to enrich the world with his "treasure for all time" before any era from whence to date had yet

with those later bardic historians, in whom alone the true origin and substance of the whole story is to be found.

The Psalter-na-Rann attributed to the Culdee, Ængus, which is another of the writings appealed to by Dr. O'Connor, on this point, was, however, not the work of that pious author (who wrote solely on religious subjects,) nor of a date earlier, as is evident, than the tenth century. See Lanigan, Ecclesiast. Hist., chap. xx. note 107.

* This writer, who died in the year 884, was the author of a poem, beginning, "Let us sing the origin of the Gadelians:" in which, deriving the origin of the Milesians from Japhet, son of Noah, he gives an account of the peregrinations of the ancestors of the Irish from the dispersion at Babel to the arrival in Ireland. Contemporary with Maolmura was Flann Mac Lonan, of whose compositions there remain, says Mr. O'Reilly, three poems, which "are to be found in the account of the spreading branches of Heber, son of Milesius, in the Leabhar Muimhneach, or Munster Book."

† From this work, which was compiled, about the beginning of the tenth century, by Cormac Mac Culinan, Bishop of Cashel and King of Munster. Keating professes to have drawn a great part of his History of Ireland. "Since most," says Keating, "of the authentic records of Ireland are composed in *dana*, or verse, I shall receive them as the principal testimonies to follow in compiling the following history; for, notwithstanding that some of the chronicles in Ireland differ from these poetical records in some cases, yet the testimony of the annals that were written in verse is not for that reason invalid."—*Preface.* About the middle of the tenth century flourished Eochaidh O'Floinn, whose poems, relating to the marvels of the first Irish colonies, the battles between the Nemethians and the sea rovers, the destruction of Conan's Tower, are still preserved in the books of Glendalough, Ballymote, and Leacan, the Dinn Seanchas, Book of Invasions, &c.

‡ "Sic mihi peritissimi Scottorum nuntiaverunt." Nennius wrote about the year 858.

§ The extravagant chronology of the metrical catalogues of kings given by Gilla-Coeman, and other later bards, is fully acknowledged by Dr. O'Connor himself:—"Hæc plane indicant nostras, de Scotorum origine, et primo in Hiberniam ac inde in Britainniam adventu, traditiones metricas historica esse fide suffultas; sed dum bardi prodigiosam antiquitatem majoribus adscribere conarentur id tantum fingendi licentia efficere ut quas illustrare debuerant veritates offuscarent, et dum Hiberniam fabulis nobilitare cupiunt ipsi sibi fidem ita derogant ut postea, cum ad tempora historica descendunt, etsi vera dixerint, nimia severitate redarguantur."—*Prol.* 2. xlvi.

It was by Coeman, notwithstanding, that author of Ogygia chiefly regulated his chronology; and the erudite efforts which he makes to reconcile his system to common sense, show how laboriously, sometimes, the learned can go astray. "It is no wonder," says Mr. O'Connor of Balenagare, "that Gilla-Coeman, and many others of our old antiquaries, have fallen into mistakes and anachronisms: to their earliest reports Mr. O'Flaherty gave too much credit, and to their later accounts Sir James Ware gave too little."—*Reflections on the Hist. of Ireland, Collectan.* No. 10.

‖ "The Danes," saith Dudo S. Quintin, "derived themselves from the Danai; the Prussians from Prusias, King of Bithynia, who brought the Greeks along with them. Only the Scots and Irish had the wit to derive themselves from the Greeks and Egyptians together."—*Antiq. of British Churches.*

been established in Greece. It was, however, in this very mode of computing by regal successions that the great source of the false chronology of the Irish antiquaries lay. From the earliest times, the government of that country consisted of a cluster of kingdoms, where, besides the monarch of the whole island and the four provincial kings, there was also a number of inferior sovereigns, or dynasts, who each affected the regal name and power. Such a state of things it was that both tempted and enabled the genealogists to construct that fabric of fictitious antiquity by which they imposed not only on others, but on themselves. Having such an abundance of royal blood thus placed at their disposal, the means afforded to them of filling up the genealogical lines, and thereby extending back the antiquity of the monarchy, were far too tempting to be easily resisted. Accordingly,—as some of those most sanguine in the cause of our antiquities have admitted,—not only were kings who had been contemporaries made to succeed each other, but even princes, acknowledged only by their respective factions, were promoted to the rank of legitimate monarchs, and took their places in the same regular succession.* By no other expedient, indeed, could so marvellous a list of royalty have been fabricated, as that which bestows upon Ireland, before the time of St. Patrick, no less than a hundred and thirty-six monarchs of Milesian blood; thereby extending the date of the Milesian or Scotic settlement to so remote a period as more than a thousand years before the birth of Christ.

Between the metrical historians, or rather romancers, of the middle ages, and those regular annalists who, at the same and a later period, but added their own stock of contemporary records to that consecutive series of annals which had been delivered down, in all probability, for many ages,—between these two sources of evidence, a wide distinction, as I have already inculcated, is to be drawn.† It is true that, in some of the collections of Annals that have come down to us, the fabulous wonders of the first four ages of the world, from Cæsara down to the landing of the sons of Milesius, have been, in all their absurdity, preserved,—as they are, indeed, in most histories of the country down to the present day. It is likewise true, that by most of the annalists the same deceptive scheme of chronology has been adopted, by which the lists of the kings preceding the Christian era are lengthened out so preposterously into past time. But, admitting to the full all such deductions from the authority of these records, more especially as regards their chronology for the times preceding our era, still their pretensions, on the whole, to rank as fair historical evidence, can hardly, on any just grounds, be questioned.

From the objections that have just been alleged against most of the other Books of Annals, that of Tigernach is almost wholly free; as, so far from placing in the van of history the popular fictions of his day, this chronicler has passed them over significantly in silence; and beginning his Annals with a comparatively late monarch, Kimboath, pronounces the records of the Scots, previously to that period, to have been all uncertain.‡ The feeling of confidence which so honest a commencement inspires, is fully justified by the tone of veracity which pervades the whole of his statements; and, according as he approaches the Christian era, and, still more, as he advances into that period, the remarkable consistency of his chronology, his knowledge and accuracy in synchronizing Irish events with those of the Roman history, and the uniformly dry matter of fact which forms the staple of his details, all bespeak for these records a confidence of no ordinary kind; and render them, corroborated as they are by other annals of the same grave description, a body of evidence, even as to the earlier parts of Irish history, far more trustworthy and chronological than can be adduced for some of the most accredited trans-

* A nearly similar mode of lengthening out their regal lists was practised among the Egyptians. "Their kings," says Bryant, "had many names and titles; these titles have been branched out into persons, and inserted in the lists of real monarchs; .... by which means the chronology of Egypt has been greatly embarrassed."

† Till of late years they have been, by most writers, both English and Irish, confounded. Thus the sensible author of "An Analysis of the Antiquities of Ireland," who, though taking a just and candid view of his subject, had no means of access to the documents which alone could strengthen and illustrate it, has, in the following passage, mixed up together, as of equal importance, our most fabulous compilations and most authentic annals:—"Let us have faithful copies, with just versions of the hidden records of Keating, of the Psalter of Cashel, of the Book of Lecan, of the Annals of Iniafallen, of those of the Four Masters, and of every other work which may be judged to be of importance. The requisition is simple as it is reasonable. They have long amused us with declamations on the inestimable value of these literary treasures; and surely, after having excited our curiosity, their conduct will be inexcusable, if they do not in the end provide for its gratification."

‡ Doctor O'Connor, it is right to mention, is of opinion that Tigernach had, like all the other annalists, begun his records from the creation of the world, and that the commencement of his manuscript has been lost. But, besides that, the view taken by the annalist as to the uncertainty of all earlier monuments, sufficiently accounts for his not ascending any higher, all the different manuscripts, it appears, of his Annals agree in not carrying the records farther back than A. C. 305.

actions of that early period of Grecian story, when, as we know, the accounts of great events were kept by memory alone.*

A learned writer, who, by the force of evidence, has been constrained to admit the antiquity of the lists of Irish kings, has yet the inconsistency to deny to this people, the use of letters before the coming of St. Patrick. It is to be recollected, that the regal lists which he thus supposes to have been but orally transmitted, and which, from the commencement of the Christian era, are shown to have been correctly kept, consists of a long succession of princes, in genealogical order, with, moreover, the descent even of the collateral branches in all their different ramifications.† Such is the nature of the royal lists which, according to this sapient supposition, must have been transmitted correctly, from memory to memory, through a lapse of many centuries; and such the weakness of that sort of skepticism,—not unmixed sometimes with a lurking spirit of unfairness,—which, while straining at imaginary difficulties on one side of a question, is prepared to swallow the most indigestible absurdities on the other. And here a consideration on the general subject of Irish antiquities presents itself, which, as it has had great weight in determining my own views of the matter, may, perhaps, not be without some influence on the mind of my reader. In the course of this chapter shall be laid before him a view of the state in which Ireland was found in the fifth century,—of the condition of her people, their forms of polity, institutions, and usages at that period when the Christian faith first visited her shores; and when, by the light which then broke in upon her long seclusion, she became, for the first time, in any degree known to the other nations of Europe. In that very state, political and social, in which her people were then found, with the very same laws, forms of government, manners and habits, did they remain, without change or innovation, for the space of seven hundred years; and though, at the end of that long period, brought abjectly under a foreign yoke, yet continued unsubdued in their attachment to the old law of their country, nor would allow it to be superseded by the code of the conqueror for nearly five hundred years after.

It is evident that to infuse into any order of things so pervading a principle of stability, must have been the slow work of time alone; nor could any system of laws and usages have taken so strong a hold of the hearts of a whole people as those of the Irish had evidently obtained at the time of the coming of St. Patrick, without the lapse of many a foregone century, to enable them to strike so deeply their roots. In no country, as we shall see, was Christianity received with so fervid a welcome; but in none also had she to make such concessions to old established superstitions, or to leave so much of those religious forms and prejudices, which she found already subsisting, unaltered. Nor was it only over the original Irish themselves, that these prescriptive laws had thus by long tenure gained an ascendency: as even those foreign tribes,—for the most part, as we have seen, Teutonic,—who obtained a settlement among them, had been forced, though conquerors, to follow in the current of long-established customs;‡ till, as was said of the conquering colonists of an after day, they grew, at length, to be more Hibernian than the Hibernians themselves. The same ancient forms of religion and of government were still preserved; the language of the multitude soon swept away that of the mere caste

* "It is strongly implied by his (Pausanias's) expression, that the written register of the Olympian victors was not so old as Chorœbus, but that the account of the first Olympiads had been kept by memory alone. Indeed, it appears certain from all memorials of the best authority, that writing was not common in Greece so early."—*Mitford*, vol. i. chap. 3.

"When we consider that this was the first attempt (the Olympionics of Timæus of Sicily) that we know of, to establish an era, and that it was in the 129th Olympiad, what are we to think of the preceding Greek chronology?"—*Wood's Inquiry into the Life, &c., of Homer.*

† "In Ireland, the genealogies which are preserved, could not have been handed down in such an extensive, and at the same time so correct a manner, without this acquaintance with letters, as the tables embrace too great a compass to retain them in the memory; and as, without the assistance of these elements of knowledge there would have been no sufficient inducement to bestow on them such peculiar attention."—*Webb, Analysis of the Antiq of Ireland* Another well-informed writer thus enforces the same view:—"The Irish genealogical tables, which are still extant, carry intrinsic proofs of their being genuine and authentic, by their chronological accuracy and consistency with each other through all the lines collateral, as well as direct; a consistency not to be accounted for on the supposition of their being fabricated in a subsequent age of darkness and ignorance, but easily explained if we admit them to have been drawn from the real source of family records and truth."—*Inquiry concerning the original of the Scots in Britain, by Barnard, Bishop of Killaloe.*

"Foreigners may imagine that it is granting too much to the Irish, to allow them lists of kings more ancient than those of any other country in modern Europe; but the singularly compact and remote situation of that island, and its freedom from Roman conquest, and from the concussions of the fall of the Roman empire, may infer this allowance not too much. But all contended for is the list of kings so easily preserved by the repetition of bards, at high solemnities, and some grand events of history."—*Pinkerton, Inquiry into the Hist. of Scotland*, part iv. chap. i.

‡ The consequences of this "Oriental inflexibility,"—as Niebber expresses it, in speaking of the Syrians,—are thus described by Camden:—"The Irish are so wedded to their own customs, that they not only retain them themselves, but corrupt the English that come among them.."

who ruled them, and their entire exemption from Roman dominion left them safe from even a chance of change.*

How far the stern grasp of Roman authority might have succeeded in effacing from the minds of the Irish their old habits and their predilections, it is needless now to inquire. But had we no other proof of the venerable antiquity of their nation, this fond fidelity to the past, this retrospective spirit, which is sure to be nourished in the minds of a people by long-hallowed institutions, would, in the absence of all other means of proof, be fully sufficient for the purpose. When, in addition to this evidence impressed upon the very character of her people, we find Ireland furnished also with all that marks an ancient nation,—unnumbered monuments of other days and belonging to unknown creeds,—a language the oldest of all European tongues still spoken by her people, and Annals written in that language of earlier date than those of any other northern nation of Europe,† tracing the line of her ancient kings, in chronological order, up as far at least as the commencement of the Christian era,—when we find such a combination of circumstances all bearing in the same direction, all confirming the impression derived from the historical character of the people,—it is surely an abuse of the right of doubting, to reject lightly such an amount of evidence, or resist the obvious conclusion to which it all naturally leads.

Among the most solemn of the customs observed in Ireland, during the times of paganism, was that of keeping, in each of the provinces, as well as at the seat of the monarchical government, a public Psalter, or register, in which all passing transactions of any interest were noted down. This, like all their other ancient observances, continued to be retained after the introduction of Christianity; and to the great monasteries, all over the country, fell the task of watching over and continuing these records.‡ That, in their zeal for religion, they should have destroyed most of those documents which referred to the dark rites and superstitions of heathenism, appears highly credible.§ But such records as related chiefly to past political events were not obnoxious to the same hostile feeling; and these the monks not only, in most instances, preserved, but carried on a continuation of them, from age to age, in much the same tone of veracious dryness as characterizes that similar series of records, the Saxon Chronicle. In like manner, too, as the English annalists are known, in most instances, to have founded their narrations upon the Anglo-Saxon documents derived from their ancestors, so each succeeding Irish chronicler transmitted the records which he found existing, along with his own; thus giving to the whole series, as has been well said of the Saxon Chronicle, the force of contemporary evidence.‖

The precision with which the Irish annalists have recorded, to the month, day, and hour, an eclipse of the sun, which took place in the year 664, affords both an instance of the exceeding accuracy with which they observed and noted passing events, and also an undeniable proof that the annals for that year, though long since lost, must have been in the hands of those who have transmitted to us that remarkable record. In calculating the period of the same eclipse, the Venerable Bede¶—led astray, it is plain, by his ignorance of that yet undetected error of the Dionysian cycle, by which the equation of the motions of the sun and moon was affected,—exceeded the true time of the event by several days. Whereas, the Irish chronicler, wholly ignorant of the rules of astronomy, and merely recording what he had seen passing before his eyes,—namely, that the eclipse occurred, about the tenth hour, on the 3d of May, in the year 664,—has transmitted a date to posterity, of which succeeding astronomers have acknowledged the accuracy.

* It has been falsely asserted by some writers, that the Romans visited, and even conquered, Ireland. The old chronicler, Wyntown, carries them to that country even so early as the first century; and Gueudeville, the wretched compiler of the Atlas Historique, has, in his map of Ireland, represented the country as reduced within the circle of the Roman sway. The pretended monk, Richard, also, who, thanks to the credulity of historians, was permitted to establish a new Roman province, Vespasiana, to the north of Antonine's Wall, has, in like manner, made a present to Constantine the Great of the tributary submission of Ireland. "A. M. 4307, Constantinus, qui Magnus postea dicitur . . . cui se sponte tributariam offert Hibernia."

† "Cæterarum enim gentium Septentrionalium antiquitates scriptas longe recentiores esse existimo, si cum Hibernicis comparentur."—*Dr. O'Connor, Ep. Nunc.* xix.

‡ "Alibi indicavi celebriora Hiberniæ monasteria amanuensem aluisse, *Scribhinn* appellatum."—*Rer. Hib. Script. Ep. Nunc.*

§ "Of the works of the Druids, as we are informed from the Lecan Records, by the learned Donald Mac Firbis, no fewer than 180 tracts were committed to the flames at the instance of St. Patrick. Such an example set the converted Christians to work in all parts, till, in the end, all the remains of the Druidic superstition were utterly destroyed."—*Dissert. on the Hist. of Ireland.*

‖ "The annals of these writers are, perhaps, but Latin translations of Anglo-Saxon Chronicles .... at least, the existence of similar passages, yet in Anglo-Saxon, is one of the best proofs we can obtain of this curious fact, that the Latin narrations of all our chroniclers, of the events preceding the Conquest, are in general translations or abridgments from the Anglo-Saxon documents of our ancestors. This fact is curious, because, wherever it obtains, it gives to the whole series of our annals the force of contemporary evidence."—*Turner, Hist. of Anglo-Saxons*, book vi. chap. 7.

¶ Hist. Ecclesiast. lib. iii. can. 27.

It may be said, that this observation was supplied and interpolated by some later hand; but this would only rescue us from one difficulty to involve us as deeply in another; as it must, in that case, be admitted that among the Irish of the middle ages were to be found astronomers sufficiently learned to be able to anticipate that advanced state of knowledge which led to the correction of the dionysian period, and to ascertain, to the precise hour, a long-past eclipse, which the learned Bede, as we have seen, was unable to calculate to the day. But how far, at a distance nearly two centuries from the time of this eclipse, were even the best Irish scholars from being capable of any such calculations may be judged from a letter, still extant, on this very subject of eclipses, which was addressed to Charlemagne by an Irish doctor of the ninth century, named Dungal.* The letter is in reply to a question proposed by the emperor to the most eminent scholars of that day in Europe, respecting the appearance, as had been alleged, of two solar eclipses, in the course of the year 810; and the Irish doctor, though so far right as to express his doubts that these two eclipses had been visible, is unable, it is plain, to assign any scientific reason for his opinion. Down to a much later period, indeed, so little had the Irish scholars advanced in this science, that as it appears from the second part of the Annals of Inisfallen, they had one year† experienced much difficulty and controversy before they could succeed even in fixing Easter Day.

It may, therefore, be taken for granted, that it was not from any scientific calculation of after times, but from actual and personal observation at the moment that this accurate date of the eclipse in 664 was derived.‡ With equal clearness does it follow that some record of the observation must have reached those annalists, who, themselves ignorant of the mode of calculating such an event, have transmitted it accurately to our days as they received it. There are still earlier eclipses,—one as far back as A. D. 496,—the years of whose appearance we find noted down by the chroniclers with equal correctness: and so great was the regularity with which, through every succeeding age, all such changes in the ordinary aspect of the heavens was observed and registered, that, by means of these records, the chronologist is enabled to trace the succession, not only of the monarchs of Ireland, but of the inferior kings, bishops, and abbots, from the first introduction of Christianity, down to the occupation of the country by the English.

Having, therefore, in the accurate date of the eclipse of 664, and in its correct transmission to succeeding times, so strong an evidence of the existence of a written record at that period; and knowing, moreover, that of similar phenomena in the two preceding centuries, the memory has also been transmitted down to after ages, it is not surely assuming too much to take for granted that the transmission was effected in a similar manner; and that the medium of written record, through which succeeding annalists were made acquainted with the day and hour of the solar eclipse of 664,§ conveyed to them also the following simple memorandum which occurs in their chronicles for the year 469.—"Death of Mac-Cuilin, bishop of Lusk.—An eclipse of the sun.—The pope Gelasius died."

It thus appears pretty certain, that, as far back as the century in which Christianity became the established faith of Ireland, the practice of chronicling public events may be traced; and I have already shown, that the same consecutive chain of records carries the links back, with every appearance of historical truth, to at least the commencement of the Christian era, if not to a century or two beyond that period. To attempt to fix, indeed, the precise time when the confines of history begin to be confused with those of fable, is a task in Irish antiquities, as in all others, of mere speculation and conjecture.‖

* Epist. Dungali Reclusi ad Carol. Magnum de dupliciti Solis Eclipsi, Ann. 810. This letter may be found in D'Achéry's Spicilegium, tom. iii. together with some critical remarks upon it by Ismael Bullialdus, the learned champion of the Philolaic system, whom D'Achéry had consulted on this subject.

† Rer. Hibern. Script. Vol. 2. cxxxvi. Dr. O'Connor refers, for the above record, to the year 1444; but this is evidently a typographical error, such as abound, I regret to say, throughout this splendid work,—the continuation of the Annals of Inisfallen having come down no farther than the year 1320.

‡ Annals of Tigernach. For the substance of the argument, founded upon this record, I am indebted to Dr. O'Connor, Prol. 2. cxxxiv.

§ The dates assigned to the several eclipses are, in this and other instances confirmed by their accordance with the catalogues of eclipses composed by modern astronomers, with those in the learned work of the Benedictines, and other such competent authorities. There is even an eclipse, it appears, noticed in the Annals of Ulster, ad. ann. 674, which has been omitted in *L'Art de vérifier les Dates*.—Ep. Nunc. xciv.

‖ According to Mr. O'Connor of Balenacgare, in his later and more moderate stage of antiquarianism, "it is from the succession of Feredach the Just, and the revolution soon after, under Tuathal the Acceptable, that we can date exactness in our Heathen History."—*Reflections on the Hist. of Ireland.* The period here assigned commences about A. D. 85. A Right Reverend writer, however, in the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy carries in his faith in Irish chronology much farther. "A general agreement," says Bishop Barnard, "appears in the names and lineage of that long series of princes that succeeded and descended from the first conqueror down to the fifth century; and the descent of the collateral branches is traced up to the royal stem with such precision and consistency, as shows it to have been once a matter of public concern. The later bards and seanachies could not have fabricated tables that should have stood the test of critical examination as these will do; from whence I infer, that they have been a true transcript from ancient records then extant,

It has been seen that Tigernach, by far the best informed and most judicious of our annalists, places the dawn of certainty in Irish history at so early a period as the reign of Kimboath, about 300 years before the birth of Christ: and it is certain that the building of the celebrated Palace of Emania, during that monarch's reign, by establishing an era, or fixed point of time, from whence chronology might begin to calculate, gives to the dates and accounts of the succeeding reigns an appearance of accuracy not a little imposing. This apparent exactness, however, in the successions previous to the Christian era, will not stand the test of near inquiry. For the purpose of making out a long line of kings before that period, a deceptive scheme of chronology has been adopted; and all the efforts made by O'Flaherty and others to connect the traditions of those times into a series of regular history, but serve to prove how hopeless, or, at least, wholly uncertain, is the task.

As we descend towards the first age of Christianity, events stand out from the ground of tradition more prominently, and begin to take upon them more of the substance of historical truth. The restoration, under Eochy Feyloch, of the ancient Pentarchy which had been abolished by the monarch Hugony,—the important advance made in civilization during the reign of Conquovar Mac Ness, by committing the laws of the country to writing,—these and other signal events, almost coeval with the commencement of Christianity, border so closely upon that period to which, it has been shown, written records most probably extended, as to be themselves all but historical.

In corroboration of the view here taken of the authenticity of the Irish Annals, and of the degree of value and confidence which is due to them, I need but refer to an authority, which, on such subjects, ranks among the highest. "The Chronicles of Ireland," says Sir James Mackintosh, "written in the Irish language, from the second century to the landing of Henry Plantagonet, have been recently published, with the fullest evidence of their genuineness and exactness. The Irish nation, though they are robbed of many of their legends by this authentic publication, are yet by it enabled to boast that they possess genuine history several centuries more ancient than any other European nation possesses, in its present spoken language;—they have exchanged their legendary antiquity for historical fame. Indeed, no other nation possesses any monument of its literature, in its present spoken language, which goes back within several centuries of the beginning of these chronicles."*

With the exception of the mistake into which Sir James Mackintosh has here, rather unaccountably, been led, in supposing that, among the written Irish chronicles which have come down to us, there are any so early as the second century, the tribute paid by him to the authenticity and historical importance of these documents† appears to me, in the highest degree, deserved; and comes with the more authority, from a writer whose command over the wide domain of history enabled him fully to appreciate the value of any genuine addition to it.

It has been thus clearly, as I conceive, demonstrated that our Irish Annals are no forgery of modern times; no invention, as has been so often alleged, by modern monks and versifiers: but, for the most part, a series of old authentic records, of which the transcripts have from age to age been delivered down to our own times. Though confounded ordinarily with the fabulous tales of the Irish Bards, these narrations bear on the face of them a character the very reverse of poetical, and such as, in itself alone, is a sufficient guarantee of their truth. It has been shown, moreover, that the lists preserved of the ancient Irish kings (more ancient than those of any other country in modern Eu-

but since destroyed. I 'm ready to admit, however, that the transactions of those times are mixed with the fictions of later ages . . . . it is, therefore, neither to be received nor rejected in the gross, but to be read with a skeptical caution."—*Inquiry concerning the Original, &c., by Barnard, Bishop of Killaloe.*

* Hist. of England, vol. i. chap. 2. A writer in the Edin. Rev. No. xcii., in speaking of Dr. O'Connor's work, thus, in a similar manner, expresses himself:—"We have here the works of the ancient Irish historians, divested of modern fable and romance; and whatever opinion may be formed of the early traditions they record, satisfactory evidence is afforded that many facts they relate, long anterior to our earliest chroniclers, rest on contemporary authority. . . . Some of Dr. O'Connor's readers may hesitate to admit the degree of culture and prosperity he claims for his countrymen; but no one, we think, can deny, after perusing his proofs, that the Irish were a lettered people, while the Saxons were still immersed in darkness and ignorance." I shall add one other tribute to the merit of Dr. O'Connor's work, coming from a source which highly enhances the value of the praise:—"A work," says Sir F. Palgrave, "which, whether we consider the learning of the editor, the value of the materials, or the princely munificence of the Duke of Buckingham, at whose expense it was produced, is without a parallel in modern literature."—*Rise of the English Commonwealth.*

† How little, till lately, these Annals were known, even to some who have written most confidently respecting Ireland, may be seen by reference to a letter addressed by Mr. O'Connor to General Vallancey, acknowledging his perusal then, for the first time, of the Annals of Tigernach and of Inisfallen, which his venerable friend had lately sent him.—*Reflect. on Hist. of Ireland, Collect.* No. 10. The ignorance of Mr. Beauford, too, a professed Irish antiquary, respecting the valuable work of Tigernach, is shown by the statement in his Druidism Revived, (Collectan. Hib, No. vii.) that the records of this annalist commence only at the fifth century, "without making the least mention of the pagan state of the Irish."

rope) are regulated by a system of chronology which, however in many respects imperfect, computes its dates in the ancient mode, by generations and successions; and was founded upon the same measures of time—the lunar year, and the regular recurrence of certain periodical festivals—by which the Greeks, the Romans, and other great nations of antiquity, all computed the earlier stages of their respective careers.

CHAPTER IX.

REVIEW OF THE INSTITUTIONS AND STATE OF CIVILIZATION OF THE PAGAN IRISH.

HAVING thus pointed out how far reliance may safely be placed on that brief abstract of the earlier portion of Irish history, which has been given in a preceding chapter, it may be worth while to pause and contemplate the picture which this period of our annals presents; a picture the more worthy of attention, as, from that persevering adherence to old customs, habits, and, by natural consequence, dispositions, which has ever distinguished the course of the Irish people, the same peculiarities of character that mark any one part of their country's history will be found to pervade every other; insomuch, that, allowing only for that degree of advancement in the arts and luxuries of life, which in the course of time could not but take place, it may be asserted, that such as the Irish were in the early ages of their pentarchy, such, in most respects, they have remained to the present day.

We have seen that, from the earliest times of which her traditions preserve the memory, Ireland was divided into a certain number of small principalities, each governed by its own petty king, or dynast, and the whole subordinate to a supreme monarch, who had nominally, but seldom really, a control over their proceedings. This form of polity, which continued to be maintained, without any essential innovation upon its principle, down to the conquest of the country by Henry II., was by no means peculiar to Ireland, but was the system common to the whole Celtic, if not also Teutonic race*, and, like all the other primitive institutions of Europe, had its origin in the East. Without going so far back as the land of Canaan, in the time of Joshua, where every city could boast its own king, we find that the small and narrow territory of the Phœnicians was, in a similar manner, parcelled out into kingdoms; and from Homer's account of the separate dominions of the Grecian chiefs, it would seem that they also were constructed upon the same Canaanite pattern. The feeling of clanship, indeed, out of which this sort of government by a chieftainry sprung, appears to have prevailed strongly in Greece, and to have been one of the great cements of all their confederations, warlike or political.†

In none of these countries, however, do the title and power of Royalty appear to have been partitioned out into such minute divisions and subdivisions as in the provincial government of Ireland, where, in addition to the chief king of each province, every subordinate prince, or head of a large district, assumed also the title of king, and exercised effectually within his own dominion all the powers of sovereignty,—even to the prerogative of making war, not only with coequal princes, but with the king of the whole province, whenever he could muster up a party sufficiently strong for such an enterprise.

To the right of primogeniture, so generally acknowledged in those ages, no deference whatever was paid by the Irish. Within the circle of the near kin of the reigning prince, all were alike eligible to succeed him; so that the succession may be said to have been hereditary as to the blood, but elective as to the person.‡ Not only the monarch himself

* During the heptarchy, the island of Great Britain contained about fifteen kingdoms, Saxons, British and Scotch; and in one of the smallest of them, the kingdom of Kent, there were at one time three chiefs on whom the annalists bestow the title of king. See Edin. Review, No. lxx. art. 12.

† The opinion that the feudal system orignated in the East, is not without some strong evidence in its favour. In Diodorus Siculus, (lib. I.) we find the tenure by military service pretty accurately described, and said to be a custom of the Egyptians, as well as of some Greek cities derived from them. Δευτεραν δε ταξιν γενεσθαι την των γεωμετρων, των οφειλοντων δ' αλλα κεκτησθαι και πολεμειν υπερ της κωλεως, δμοιως τοις, κατ' Αιγυπτον νομαζομενοις γεωργοις και τους μαχιμους παρεχομενοις.

See Richardson, (Dissert. on the languages, &c. of Eastern Nations,) who asserts that feudality "flourished in the East, with much vigour, in very early times."

‡ Campbell's Strictures, &c. sect. v.

was created thus by election, but a successor, or Tanist,* was, during his lifetime, assigned to him by the same process; and as if the position alone of heir-apparent did not render him sufficiently formidable to the throne, the law, in the earlier ages, also, it is said, conferred upon him the right of being chief general of the army, and chief judge of the whole state or kingdom. For the succession to the minor thrones a similar provision was made: to every petty king a successor was, in like manner, appointed, with powers proportioned to those of his chief; and thus, in addition to the constant dissension of all these princes among themselves,† each saw by his side an adult and powerful rival, chosen generally without any reference to his own choice or will; and, as mostly happens, even where the successor is so by hereditary right, forming an authorized rallying-point for the ambitious and disaffected.

So many contrivances, as they would seem, for discord, could not but prove successful. All the defects of the feudal system were here combined, without any of its atoning advantages. It is true that an executive composed of such divided and mutually thwarting powers must have left to the people a considerable portion of freedom; but it was a freedom, under its best aspects, stormy and insecure, and which life was passed in struggling for, not in enjoying. The dynasts themselves, being, from their position, both subjects and rulers, were, by turns, tyrants and slaves: even the monarchy itself was often regarded but as a prize to the strongest; and faction pervaded all ranks, from the hovel to the supreme throne. Accordingly, as may be gathered from even the comparatively pacific events I have selected, commotion and bloodshed were, in those times, the ordinary course of public affairs. Among the numerous occupants of thrones, the tenure of authority and of life was alike brief; and it is computed that, of the supreme kings who wielded the sceptre, before the introduction of Christianity, not one seventh part died a natural death, the remaining sovereigns having been taken off in the field, or by murder. The same rivalry, the same temptations to violence, were in operation throughout all the minor sovereignties: every provincial king, every head of a sept, had his own peculiar sphere of turbulence, in which, on a smaller scale, the same scenes were enacted; in which the law furnished the materials of strife, and the sword alone was called in to decide it.

Among the many sources of this discord must not be forgotten those tributes, or supplies, which, in return for the subsidies granted to them by their superiors, the inferior princes were bound to furnish. This exchange of subsidy and tribute,—the latter being usually paid in cattle, clothes, utensils, and, frequently, military aid,‡—was carried on proportionably through all the descending scale of dynasties, and its mutual obligations enforced as strictly between the lord of the smallest rath and his dependents, as between the monarch and his subordinate kings. Among the various forms in which tribute was exacted, not the least oppressive were those periodical progresses of the monarch, during which he visited the courts of the different provincial kings, and was, together with his retinue, entertained, for a certain time, by each. Every inferior lord or chieftian assumed a similar privilege, and, at certain seasons, visiting from tenant to tenant, was maintained, with his followers, at their expense. This custom was called, in after-times, (by a name not, I suspect, of Irish origin,) coshering.

Though the acceptance of subsidy from the monarch implied an acknowledgment of subordination and submission, it was of a kind wholly different from that of the feoffees, in the feudal system,§ who, by the nature of their tenures, were subjected to military ser-

* "Whoever knows any thing of Irish history will readily agree that an Irish Tanist of a royal family even after those of that quality were deprived of the judiciary power, and not always invested with the actual command of the army, was, notwithstanding, held in such high consideration, as to be esteemed nothing less than a secondary king. The title of Righ-damnha, meaning king *in fieri*, was generally given to the presumptive successor of the reigning king."—*Dissert. on Laws of the Ancient Irish.*

† The following is O'Flaherty's applausive view of this system:—"He (Selden) cannot produce an instance in all Europe of a more ancient, perfect, or better-established form of government than that of Ireland; where the sovereign power was concentred in one king, and the subaltern power, gradually descending from the five kings to the lowest classes of men, represents and exactly resembles the Hierarchy of the Celestial Christ, described in the verses addressed to the archangel Michael."—*Ogyg.*, part i. book 1.

‡ There is extant a book containing the laws of these different subsidies and tributes, called the Leabhar na Ceart, or Book of Rights, and attributed to St. Benin, the favourite disciple of St. Patrick. It is clear, however, from the corslets and suits of armour so profusely enumerated in the list of royal gifts, that these "State Laws of Subsidies," as Vallancey styles them, must have been of a much later date; not more ancient, probably, than those songs and tales bearing the name of the poet Oisin, in which a similar display of rich armour is prematurely introduced. An account of this curious volume may be found in the Trans. Iberno-Celt. Soc., and in Vallancey's Dissert. on the Laws of the Ancient Irish.

§ That there was a degree of resemblance between the feudal system and the Irish, will appear from the description given by Mr. Hallam of the state of France at the time when Hugh Capet usurped the throne. "France," says this admirable historian, "was rather a collection of states partially allied to each other, than a single monarchy. The kingdom was as a great fief, or rather a bundle of fiefs, and the king little more than one of a number of feudal nobles, differing rather in dignity than in power from some of the rest."—*View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages.* There were, however, as I have shown above, essential

vice; whereas, in Ireland, the subordinate princes were entirely free and independent of those above them, holding their possessions under no condition of any service or homage whatsoever.* Even in France, the great feudatories, in many instances, did not hesitate to take arms against their sovereign; and still less scrupulous, it may be supposed, were the numerous free tenants of thrones under the Irish system.† Sufficient pretexts for withholding tribute from the monarch were seldom wanting to the factious; and by recourse to arms alone could the sovereign, in such cases, seek redress. On the eve, sometimes, of a battle, the tributaries failed in bringing up their promised aid; or, still worse, entered the field reluctantly, and, on the first attack, took flight.‡

Under any circumstances, so general and constant a state of warfare must, by rendering impossible the cultivation of the peaceful arts, prove fatal to the moral advancement of the people; but the civil and domestic nature of the feuds in which the Irish were constantly engaged, could not but render them, beyond all other species of warfare, demoralizing and degrading. To the invasion of a foreign land men march with a spirit of adventure, which throws an air of chivalry even around rapine and injustice; while they who resist, even to the death, any invasion of their own, are sure of enlisting the best feelings of human nature in their cause. But the sanguinary broils of a nation armed against itself have no one elevating principle to redeem them, and are inglorious alike in victory and defeat. Whatever gives dignity to other warfare was wanting in these personal, factious feuds. The peculiar bitterness attributed to family quarrels marks also the course of civil strife; and that flow of generous feeling which so often succeeds to fierce hostility between strangers, has rarely, if ever, been felt by parties of the same state who have been once arrayed in arms against each other. One of the worst results, indeed, of that system of law and government under which Ireland first started into political existence, and retained, in full vigour of abuse, for much more than a thousand years, was the constant obstacles which it presented to the growth of a public national spirit, by separating the mass of the people into mutually hostile tribes, and accustoming each to merge all thought of the general peace or welfare in its own factious views, or the gratification of private revenge.

That separate states may be so bound in federate union as to combine effectively for all the great purposes of peace and war, is sufficiently proved by more than one historical instance. But there was no such form or principle of cohesion in the members of the Irish pentarchy. The interposing power assigned, theoretically, to the monarch, became of little effect in practice, and, in moments of peculiar violence, when most wanted, was always least efficient. Part of the business, we are told, of the triennial assemblies held at Tara was to hear appeals against tyrannical princes, and interpose for the redress of wrongs. But even granting these conventions to have been held regularly, which appears more than doubtful,§ it is plain that in the rapid succession of daily scenes of blood which stained the Irish annals, an assembly convened but once in every three years must have exercised but a tardy and soon-forgotten influence.

Such a course of discord and faction, prolonged, as it was, through centuries, could not fail to affect materially the general character of the nation, and to lay deep the seeds of future humiliation and weakness. A people divided thus among themselves must have been, at all times, a ready prey for the invader; and the fatal consequences of such disunion were shown most lamentably, a few centuries after this period, when, as will be seen, by Irish assistance alone were the Danish marauders enabled to preserve the footing they so long and so ruinously held in the country.‖ By the same causes, though existing, perhaps,

differences between the two systems; and Mr. Hallam himself, in speaking of the constitution of ancient Ireland, remarks that the relations borne by the different ranks of chieftains to each other and to the crown, may only loosely be called federal."—*Constitut. Hist* vol. iii.

* This principle was retained, even after the subjection of the country to the English. "The Irish lords," says Sir J Davis, "did only promise to become tributary to Henry II., and such as pay tribute are not properly subjects, but sovereigns."

† According to Vallancey, even the monarch himself was no more exempt from attack than the rest of his royal brethren:—"Most certain it is, that the provincial kings and other sovereigns never acknowledged any supreme right in these pretenders to monarchy, but always asserted their own independency against them at the point of the sword, as appears most glaringly from the Irish Annals."—See Vallancey's clever Dissertation on the Laws of the Ancient Irish, written by him at the commencement of his career, before the Orientalism of our Irish antiquities had taken such a disturbing hold of his imagination.

‡ Leland, Preliminary Discourse.

§ If we may believe O'Halloran, the meetings of the great Fes of Teamor were interrupted even for centuries. In speaking of the convention held in the reign of Ugony the Great, he says, "This, by the by, is the first instance for above two centuries of the meeting of the Feis Tamarach, or General Convention of the Estates of the Kingdom at Tara, except such a one as was appointed by Ciombhaoth, of which I have not sufficient authority positively to affirm."—Vol. ii. chap. v.

‖ "The annals of the country bear unanimous testimony to the melancholy truth, that in these plundering expeditions they (the Danes) were frequently aided by some of the native Irish princes, who, either anxious to diminish the preponderating power of some neighbouring chieftain, or desirous to revenge some real or

in a much less aggravated degree, were the Celts, both of Britain and Gaul, brought so easily under the dominion of the Romans. The politic use to which the rival factions among the Gauls might be turned, could not escape the acute observation of Cæsar; and history, which has left untold the name of the recreant Irishman who, as we have seen, proffered his treasonable services in the camp of Agricola, has, with less charity, recorded that of the British chief Mandubratius, who, from motives of mere personal revenge, invited Cæsar into Britain.* Even in the earliest periods of Irish history may be detected some traces of this faithless spirit, which internal dissensions and mutual distrust are sure to generate among a people; and the indistinct story of the flight of Labhra, a Leinster prince, into Gaul, and his return from thence at the head of Gaulish troops, sufficiently intimates that such appeals to foreign intervention were, even in Agricola's time, not new.

While such were the evils arising from the system according to which power was distributed, no less mischiefs flowed from the laws which regulated the distribution of property. In all cases where property was connected with chieftainry, the right of succession was regulated in the same manner as that of the succession to the throne. During the lifetime of the reigning chief, some person of the sept, his brother, son, or cousin, was appointed by election to succeed him; and lands devolved in this manner were, like the inheritance of the crown, exempt from partition. To the chosen successors of kings the title of Roydamna was in general applied; but the person appointed to succeed one of the inferior chiefs was always called a Tanist. Wherever inheritances were not connected with either royalty or chieftainry, their descent was regulated by the custom of Gavelkind,—a usage common to both Gothic and Celtic nations,—and the mode in which property was partitioned and re-partitioned under this law, threw a constant uncertainty round its tenure, and in time frittered away its substance.

On the death of the Cean Finné, or head of a sept, his successor, who became such not by inheritance, but by election, or strong hand, assembled all the males of the sept, and divided the lands, at his discretion, between them. Whenever any of these inferior tenants died, the sept was again called together, and their several possessions being all thrown into hotch-potch, a new partition of all was made; in which the son of him who had died did not receive the portion his father had possessed, but a share of the whole was, according to seniority, allotted to every male of the sept. As soon as another tenant died, the tenure of the property was again disturbed, and the same process of partition, in the same invariable mode, repeated. It appears that to the Cean Finne, or head of the family, was reserved a chief rent on the gavelled lands, which maintained his power and influence over the members of the sept; and in the event of any of them forfeiting or dying without issue, secured a reversion to him of the property of the gavel lands so held.†

By the custom of Gavelkind, as it existed among the Irish, females of every degree were precluded from the inheritance; while illegitimate sons were equally entitled with the legitimate to their portions of the land. The exclusion of females from inheritance,‡—a law characteristic of those times, when lands were won and held on condition of military service alone,—was common to the Irish with most other early nations§ as well Teutons as Celts; though it is a mistake to suppose that all the Teutonic tribes adopted it.‖ The

imaginary insult received, or, perhaps, willing to share in the spoils of an opulent neighbour, were always forward to join the common enemy."—*O'Reilly, on the Brehon Laws, Trans. R. I. A.* vol. xiv.

* According to the etymologist Baxter, the name of Mandubratius signifies "the Betrayer of his Country," and was affixed to this chieftain, in consequence of his treason:—"Inde populari Cassivelanorum convicio, *Mandubratur* tunquam *Patriæ proditor* appellatus est.

† "It is also said, that when the gavel was made by the father, after his death the equal share which he allotted to himself, went to the eldest son, according to the maxim of the patriarchs, who allowed a double proportion to the first born. And, lastly, like the twin tenure of Kent, it was not subject to escheat for treason or felony."—*D'Alton, Essay on the Antiquities of Ireland.*

‡ Consistently with his notion that the Britons and the Irish were derived from the same stock, the Historian of Manchester represents this custom as existing also in Britain; but at the same time, for this, as well as for many other Irish usages, which he endeavours to prove common to both countries, refers to evidence relating to Ireland alone. It is difficult, indeed, upon any point, to place much faith in an historian who, to prove that the descent of the crown among the Britons flowed in the course of hereditary and lineal succession, tells us gravely that "Trenmor, Trathal, Conhal and Fingal—father, son, grandson, and great-grandson—successively inherited the monarchy of Morven for their patrimony."—*Hist. of Manchester*, book I. chap. viii. sect. 2.

§ Mr. O'Reilly (*Essay on the Brehon Laws*) denies that females in Ireland were excluded from the inheritance of lands; but unfortunately adduces no authority in support of his assertion. "If it would not extend this Essay (he says) to an unreasonable length, examples might be given from the ancient Irish laws sufficient to prove that women exercised the right of chiefry over lands properly their own, and had a power to dispose of all their chattel property at their pleasure." He afterwards adds, "But supposing that Irish women did not enjoy landed property, the same must be said of the women of several other ancient nations." This sort of reversionary successor resembles, in some respects, the adscititious Cæsars, or presumptive heirs of the imperial office, among the Romans.

‖ "In a word," says General Vallancey, "all the Teutonic or German nations excluded the daughters from sharing with their brothers or other heirs male in the father's landed inheritance." This is not, however, the case. In the Burgundian law, one of the most ancient codes of the barbarians, is the following passage:—

admission of natural children, however, to a legal right of inheritance, may be pronounced a custom peculiar to Ireland. General Vallancey, in his zeal to ennoble all that is connected with Irish antiquity, endeavours to show that this custom is of patriarchal origin, citing, as his only instance, that of the children of Jacob by the handmaids of his wives Leah and Rachel, who enjoyed, among the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel, a station equal to that of the children of his solemnly married wives. But the instance, besides being a solitary one, as well as attended with peculiar circumstances, is by no means sufficient to prove that such was the patriarchal custom; while, on the other hand, the significant act of Abraham, in presenting only gifts to his natural children, and separating them from his son Isaac, marks, as definitely as could be required, the distinction then drawn between legitimate and illegitimate children.*

As, in all communities, property is the pervading cement of society, a state of things such as has been just described, in which its tenure was kept, from day to day, uncertain, and its relations constantly disturbed, was perhaps the least favourable that the most perverted ingenuity could have devised, for either the encouragement of civilization or the maintenance of peace.† The election of a Tanist, too, with no more definite qualifications prescribed than that he should be chosen from among the oldest and most worthy of the sept, opened, whenever it occurred, as fertile a source of contention and rivalry as a people, ready at all times for such excitement, could desire. However great the advantages attending an equal division of descendible property, in communities advanced sufficiently in habits of industry to be able to profit by those advantages, the effect of such a custom among a people like the Irish, the great bulk of whom were in an uncivilized state, was evidently but to nurse in them that disposition to idleness which was one of the main sources of their evils, and to add to their other immunities from moral restraint, the want of that powerful influence which superior wealth must always enable its possessor to exercise. Had there been any certainty in the tenure of the property, when once divided, most of the evils attending the practice might have been escaped. But the new partition of all the lands, whenever a death occurred in the sept, and the frequent removal or translation of the inferior tenants from one portion to another, produced such uncertainty in the tenure of all possessions, as made men reckless of the future, and completely palsied every aim of honest industry and enterprise. By the habits of idleness thus engendered, the minds of the great mass of the people were left vacant and restless, to seek employment for themselves in mischief, and follow those impulses of wild and ungoverned passion, of which their natures were so susceptible.

One of the worst political consequences of these laws of property was, that, by their means, the division of the people into tribes or clans, so natural in the first infancy of society, was confirmed and perpetuated. The very warmth and fidelity with which the members of each sept combined among themselves, but the more alienated them from every part of the community, and proportionably diminished their regard for the general welfare.

Another evil of the social system, under such laws, was the false pride that could not fail to be engendered by that sort of mock kingship, that mimic sovereignty, which pervaded the whole descending scale of their grandees, down to the Ruler of a small Rath, or even the possessor of a few acres, who, as Sir John Davies says, "termed himself a Lord, and his portion of land his country." As even the lowest of these petty potentates would have considered it degrading to follow any calling or trade, a multitude of poor and proud spirits were left to ferment in idleness; and, there being but little vent, in foreign warfare, for such restlessness, till towards the decline of the Roman power in

Inter Burgundiones id volumus custodiri, ut si quis filium non reliquerit, in loco filii filia in patris matrisque hereditate succedat." The reader will find this, and other instances to the same purpose, cited in an able article on Mr. Hallam's Middle Ages, Edin. Review, No. lix.

* It is asserted by Eustathius, that, among the Greeks, as low as the time of the Trojan war, illegitimate children stood on equal grounds of favour with the legitimate; but, except occasionally, as in such instances as that of Teucer, where the high rank of both parents throws a lustre round the offence, or in cases where a god was called in to bear the burden of the offspring, there appears, among the Greeks, to have been as much disgrace attached to illegitimacy, as among any other people. So far were their laws from allowing children of this description to inherit, that, in fixing the utmost amount of money which it was lawful for a father, at any time, to give them, it was strictly provided that such sum could only be given during his lifetime.

† In speaking of the annual partition of their lands, by the ancient Germans, as described by Cæsar (lib. vi. cap. 22.), Sir F. Palgrave says, "If, as we are told by Cæsar, the Germans wished to discourage agriculture and civilization, the means were excellently adapted to the end; and to understand the rural economy of the barbaric nations, we must always keep in mind that their habitations were merely encampments upon the land. Instead of firm and permanent mansions, constituting not only the wealth, but the defence of the wealth of the owner, we must view the Teuton and the Celt dwelling in wattled hovels and turf-built shealings, which could be raised in the course of a night, and abandoned without regret or sacrifice, when the partition of the district compelled every inhabitant to accept a new domicile. Such was the state of Ireland." —Vol. i. chap. 3.

Britain, it expended itself in the struggles of domestic faction and fierce civil broils. Nor was it only by the relative position of the different classes of the country, but by that also of the different races which inhabited it, that the aliment of this false pride was so abundantly ministered. The same barbarous right of conquest by which the Spartans held their helots in bondage, was claimed and exercised by the Scotic or dominant caste of Ireland, not merely over the great mass of the population, but also over the remains of the earliest colonists—the Belgians and Damnonians. Leaving to the descendants of these ancient people only the mechanic and servile occupations, their masters reserved to themselves such employments as would not degrade their high original; and it was not till the reign of Tuathal, as we have seen, when a committee, empowered by a general assembly of the states, took the management of the trade and manufactures into their care, that any of the ruling caste condescended to employ themselves in such pursuits. But, besides this subject, or conquered class, whose position, in relation to their Scotic masters, corresponded, in some respects, with that of the Coloni among the Franks, and the Ceorls among the Anglo-Saxons, there were also purchased slaves, still lower, of course, in the social scale, and forming an article of regular commerce among the Irish, both at this period and for many centuries after. We shall see that St. Patrick, whom, as I have already stated, the soldiers of the monarch Nial carried off as a captive from the coast of Armoric Gaul, was, on his arrival in Ireland, sold as a common slave.

It has been already remarked that the system of polity maintained in Ireland bore, in many respects, a resemblance to the feudal; and some of those writers who contend for a northern colonization of this country, have referred to the apparently Gothic character of her institutions, as a confirmation of their opinion. In all probability, however, the elements of what is called the feudal system had existed in Ireland, as well as in Britain and Gaul, many ages before even the oldest date usually assigned to the first introduction of feudal law into Europe; being traceable, perhaps, even to the landing of the first colonies on these shores, when, in parcelling out their new territory, and providing for its defence, there would naturally be established, between the leaders and followers, in such an enterprise, those relations of fealty and protection, of service and reward, which the common object they were alike engaged in would necessarily call forth, and in which the principle and the rudiments of the feudal policy would be found. It has been shown by Montesquieu, from the law of the Burgundians, that when that Vandalic nation first entered Gaul, they found the tenure of land by service already existing among the people.*

Little doubt, therefore, as there is of a Scythic or Gothic colony having, about a century or two before our era, gained possession of Ireland, no evidence thereof is to be looked for in the laws and usages of that country, which, on the contrary, bear impressed on them the marks of Celtic antiquity; having existed, perhaps, through at least as many centuries before the coming of St. Patrick, as they are known to have continued to exist after that event, and with scarcely a shadow of change.

In attempting to estimate the probable degree of civilization which the people of Ireland, in those early ages, may have attained, it will be found that the picture of their state transmitted to us, as well in their own annals as in the representations of others, is made up of direct contrasts;† and that there is not a feature in their history, indicative of an advance in social refinement, that is not counteracted by some other stamped with the strongest impress of barbarism. It is only by compounding between these two opposite extremes, that a just medium can be attained, and that the true, or at least probable, state of the case, can be collected from such evidence.

The double aspect, indeed, under which the ancient character of the country thus glimmers upon us, through the mists of time, has divided the writers who treat of her antiquities into two directly opposite parties; and as if even the history of Ireland was fated to be made a subject of faction, the contest has been carried on by the respective disputants, with a degree of vehemence and even bitterness which, on a question relating to personages and events so far removed into past ages, appears not a little extraordinary. While, on the one side, the warm zealots in the cause of Ireland exalt to such a height the standard of her early civilization, as to place it on a level with that of the proudest states of antiquity,—describing the sumptuous palaces of her kings, the grand assemblies

* "Il est dit, dans la loi des Bourguignons, que quand ces peuples établirent dans les Gaules, ils recurent les deux ters des terres, et le tiers des serfs. La servitude de la glèbe étoit donc établie dans cette partie de la Gaule avant l'entrée des Bourguignons."—Liv. xxx. chap. 10.

† The character of the Issedones, a people of antiquity mentioned by Herodotus, was, in like manner, represented in perfectly different aspects to the world. While, like the ancient Irish, they were accused of feeding on the flesh of their parents, there are mentioned qualities belonging to them, characteristic of a refined people. "They venerate justice," says Herodotus, "and allow their females to enjoy equal authority with the men. It is in the same book of his work where he attributes to them this mark of social refinement, that he tells us they cooked and ate their dead parents.

of her legislators, the institutions of her various orders of chivalry, and the collegiate retreats of her scholars,—while thus, the Keatings, Walkers, O'Hallarans, availing themselves as well of the falsehood as of the facts of Irish tradition and history, have agreed in picturing the early times of their country as a perfect golden age of glory, political wisdom, and refinement; their opponents, the Ledwiches and Pinkertons, alike confident in the strength of their evidence, pronounce the whole of the very same period to have been one unreclaimed waste of ignorance and barbarism.

The chief authorities upon which this latter view of the question rests, are, among the Greek writers, Diodorus Siculus and Strabo; and among the Romans, Pomponius Mela and Solinus. By all these four writers, who flourished, at successive intervals, from a period just preceding the Christian era to about the middle of the third century, Ireland is represented to have been, at the respective times when they lived, in a state of utter savageness. According to Strabo* and Diodorus† the natives were in the habit of feeding upon human flesh; the former writer adding, that the corpses of their parents were their favourite food, and that they committed incest publicly. The description of them by Pomponius Mela is more general, but fully as strong: "They had no sense whatever," he says, "of virtue or religion:"‡ and Solinus also, in mentioning some of their barbarous customs, declares "that they made no distinction between right and wrong."§

Were there not strong grounds for calling in question their claims to authority, as regards Ireland, the evidence of these writers would possess, of course, considerable weight. But the truth is, to none of them, and, least of all, to the two most ancient and respectable of the number, Diodorus and Strabo, is any attention, on the subject of a country so wholly unknown to them, to be paid. The ready reception given by Diodorus to all stray fictions, even in those parts of his work not professedly fabulous, would, in itself, justify some degree of distrust in any statements of his not otherwise sustained. But in the case of Ireland there was, in addition to this too easy belief, an entire ignorance on the subject. Writing his work before the Romans had made any settlement in Britain, he but shared in the general darkness then prevailing, both among Romans and Greeks, with regard to the state, history, and even geographical position of the British Isles.‖ More than half a century after Diodorus had completed his history, we find Pomponius Mela declaring, that until the expedition of the emperor Claudius, then in progress, Britain had been shut out from the rest of the world.¶ When such, till that period, had been the general ignorance respecting Britain, it may be judged how secluded from the eyes of Europe must have been the still more western island in her neighbourhood; and how little known its internal state, except to those Celtic and Iberian tribes of Spain, with whom the commerce which then frequented the Irish harbours, must have been chiefly interchanged. It is, indeed, curious, as contrasted with the reports of her brute barbarism just cited, that the first authentic glimpse given of the state of Ireland by the Romans, should be to disclose to us such a scene of busy commerce in her harbours, and of navigators in her waters; while, to complete the picture, at the same moment, one of her subordinate kings was a guest, we are told, in the tent of Agricola, and negotiating with him for military aid.

The geographer Strabo, another of the witnesses adduced in proof of Irish barbarism, was equally, disqualified with Diodorus from giving evidence upon the subject, and from precisely the same cause,—his entire ignorance of all relating to it. Even on matters lying within the sphere of his own peculiar science, this able geographer has, in his account of Ireland, fallen into the most gross and presumptuous errors;** presumptuous, inasmuch as some of them were maintained in direct and wilful defiance of what had been delivered down, upon the same points, by the ancient Greek geographers, who, from following closely in the steps of the Phœnicians, were, in most instances, correct.

* The charges of Strabo against Ireland are contained in the following passage:—Περι δε ουδεν εχομεν λεγειν σαφες, πλην οτι ανθρωποφαγοι τους δε πατερας τελευτησαντας κατεσθιειν τε καλον τιθεμενοι και φανερως μισγεσθαι ταις τε αλλαις γυναιξι και μητρασι και αδελφαις.—Lib. iv.

† "They eat men," says Diodorus, in speaking of the Gauls, "like the Britons inhabiting Iris, or Irin." Φασι τινας ανθρωπους εσθιειν, ωσπερ και ζων βρεττανων τους κατοικουντας την ονομαζομενην Ιρνην.—Lib. iv. Of the application of this passage to Ireland, Rennel thus doubtfully speaks:—"It is not altogether certain, though highly probable, that the country intended is Ireland."

‡ Omnium virtutum ignari, pietatis admodum experles.—Lib. iii. c. 6.

§ Fas atque nefas eodem animo ducunt.

‖ Diodorus himself acknowledges that, at the time when he wrote, the British isles were among the regions least known to the world:—Ηκιστα γαρ βρεττανοι υπο των ποτων ανθρωπων επιγινωσκ —Lib. iii.

¶ Britannia, qualis sit qualesque progeneret, mox certiora et magis explorata dicentur. Quippe tamdiu clausam aperit ecce Principum Maximus, Claudius.—*De Sit. Orb.* lib. iii.

** Among others of these errors, he represents Ireland so far to the north of Britain, as to be almost uninhabitable from extremity of cold.—Lib. ii. As far as we have at present the means of judging, his predecessors Eratosthenes and Pytheas were far more correctly informed as to the geography of the western parts of Europe.

It ought, however, in justice to Strabo, to be mentioned, that he prefaces his account of the Irish brutalities by admitting that he had not received it from any trust-worthy authority.*

How little could have been known of Ireland at the time when Mela wrote, may be inferred from the fact which he himself tells us, that even Britain was then, for the first time, about to be made known to her invaders. But many a British campaign took place after that event, before Ireland was even thought of; and, till the time of Agricola's expedition, it was, to the Romans, an undiscovered land. With regard to Solinus, besides that the period at which he lived seems to be altogether uncertain, he is allowed, in general, to have been but an injudicious compiler from preceding writers, and little stress, therefore, is to be laid on his authority.

It is, then, manifest, that all the evidence derived from foreign sources, to prove the barbarous state of the Irish before the Christian era, must, from the very nature of the authorities themselves, be considered worthless and null; while the numerous testimonies which Ireland still can produce, in her native language, her monuments, her ancient annals and traditions, all concur in refuting so gross and gratuitous an assumption. Having disposed thus of the chief, if not the only strong grounds of one of the two conflicting hypotheses, to which the subject of Irish antiquities had given rise, I am bound to deal no less unsparingly with that other and far more agreeable delusion, which would make of Ireland, in those early ages, a paragon of civilization and refinement,—would exalt the splendour of her Royal Palaces, the romantic deeds of her Red-Branch Knights, the Celestial Judgments of her Brehons, and the high privileges and functions of her Bards. That there is an outline of truth in such representations, her most authentic records testify;—it is the filling up of this mere outline which is, for the most part, overcharged and false. The songs and legends of the country are, in such descriptions confounded with her history; her fictions have been taken for realities, and her realities heightened into romance. Those old laws and customs of the land, so ruinous, as we have seen, to peace and industry, could not have been otherwise than fatal to the progress of civilization; nor can any one who follows the dark and turbid course of our ancient history, through the unvaried scenes of turbulence and rapine which it traverses, suppose for an instant, that any high degree of general civilization could coexist with habits and practices so utterly subversive of all the elements of civilized life.

At the same time speculating on the aspect of Irish society at any period whatsoever, full allowance is to be made for those anomalies which so often occur in the course of affairs in that country, and which, in many instances, baffle all such calculations respecting its real condition, as are founded on those ordinary rules and principles by which other countries are judged. Even in the days of Ireland's Christian fame, when, amidst the darkness which hung over the rest of Europe, she stood as a light to the nations, and sent apostles in all directions from her shores,—even in that distinguished period of her history, we shall find the same contrasts, the same contrarieties of national character, presenting themselves; insomuch that it would be according as the historical painter selected his subjects of portraiture—whether from the calm and holy recesses of Glendalough and Inisfallen, or the rath of the rude chief and the fierce councils of rebel kings—that the country itself would receive either praise or reprobation, and be delineated as an island of savages or of saints.

But there is an era still more strongly illustrative of this view of Irish character, and at the same time recent enough to be within the memory of numbers still alive. That it is possible for a state of things to exist, wherein some of the best and noblest fruits of civilization may be most conspicuously displayed in one portion of the community, while the habitual violences of barbarism are, at the same time, raging in another, is but too strongly proved by the history of modern Ireland during the last thirty years of the eighteenth century,—a period adorned, it will hardly be denied, by as many high and shining names as ever graced the meridian of the most favoured country, and yet convulsed, through its whole course, by a furious struggle between the people and their rulers, maintained on both sides with a degree of ferocity, a reckless violence of spirit, worthy only of the most uncivilized life. Such an anomalous state of society, so fresh within recollection, might abate, at least, if not wholly remove, any confidence in the conclusion, that, because the public annals of ancient Ireland leave little else in the memory but a confused chaos of factions and never-ending feuds, she could not therefore have arrived at a higher rank in civilization than such habits of turbulence and lawlessness are usually found to indicate.

In the ill repute of the ancient Irish for civilization, their neighbours, the Britons,

* Και ταυτα δ' ὑυτω λεγομεν, ως ουκ εχοντες αξιοπιστους μαρτυρας.—Lib. iv.

equally shared; and the same charges of incest, community of wives, and other such abominations, which we find alleged against the Irish are brought also against the natives of Britain by Cæsar and Dion Cassius.* It is possible that, in both instances, the imputations may be traced to that policy of the commercial nations of antiquity which led them to impute all manner of atrocities and horrors to the inhabitants of places where they had established a profitable commerce.† We have seen with what jealous care the Phœnician merchants, and subsequently, also, the Carthaginians and Greeks, endeavoured to turn the attention of the world from their trade with the British Isles, so as to prevent all commercial rivals from interfering with their monopoly. A part of this policy it may have, perhaps, been to represent the Irish as brutes and cannibals, and their neighbours, the Britons, as little better; and the traders who crowded the ports of the former island in the first century would be sure to encourage the same notion. So well and long did these traditional stigmas adhere, that the poet Ausonius, in the fourth century, pronounces the appellation Briton to be then synonymous with that of bad or wicked man;‡ and about the same period,—not many years previously to the great naval expedition of the Irish monarch, Niul Giallach, against the coasts of Britain,—we find St. Jerome gravely describing an exhibition which he had himself witnessed in his youth, in Gaul, of some cannibal Scots, or Irishmen, regaling themselves upon human flesh.§

Much the same sort of inconsistencies and contradictions as are found to embarrass and render difficult any attempt to estimate the social and moral condition of the ancient Irish, will be found also in the facts illustrative of their state of advancement in those arts, inventions, and contrivances, which are the invariable results of civilized life. That, so early as the first century, their harbours were much resorted to by navigators and merchants, the authority of Tacitus leaves us no room to doubt; and their enjoyment of a foreign trade may be even referred to a much remoter period, as we find Ptolemy, in citing testimony of one of those more ancient geographers, from whom his own materials on the subject of Ireland are mostly derived, remarking, among his other claims, to credibility, his having rejected all such accounts of that country as were gathered from merchants who had visited her ports with a view to traffic alone.‖

Notwithstanding this clear and authentic evidence of her having been, not merely in the first century, but in times preceding our era, in possession of a foreign commerce, it appears equally certain that neither then, nor for many ages after, had the interior trade of the country advanced beyond the rude stages of barter; nor had coined money, that indispensable ingredient of civilized life,¶ been yet brought into use. It is true, both O'Flaherty and Keating tells us of a coinage of silver in the reign of the monarch Eadna Dearg, no less than 466 years before the birth of Christ, at a place called Argeatre, as they say, on the banks of the river Suir, in Ossory. But it is plain that the name here, as in many other such traditions, was the sole foundation of the fable,—etymology having been, in all countries, one of the most fertile sources of fiction and conjecture.** Equally groundless may be pronounced the account given by Keating of mints erected and money coined for the service of the state, about the time of the commencement of St. Patrick's apostleship. It is certain that, for many centuries after this period, the custom of paying gold by the weight may be traced; and so long did cattle, according to the primitive meaning of the term pecunia, continue to be the measure of value, that, so late as the

* Uxoris habent deni duodenique inter se communes, et maxime fratres cum fratribus parentesque cum liberis."—*De Bell. Gal.* lib. v. cap 16. In referring to the charges of these two historians against the Britons, Whitaker says, "The accusation is too surely as just as it is scandalous."—*Hist of Manchester*, book I. chap. x. sect. 5. In a sermon of St. Chrysostom, quoted by Camden (Introduct. lxx.) that father exclaims, "How often in Britain did men eat the flesh of their own kind?"

† In the opinion of Pownal, this policy of the ancients, in "keeping people away from their possessions," will account for the tales of the Anthropophagi, the Syrens, and all the other "metamorphosic fables, turning policied and commercial people into horrid and savage monsters."

‡ Aut Brito hic non est Silvius, aut malus est.—*Epig.* 110.

This poet has a whole string of pointless epigrams on the same quibble. Cellarius, in quoting one of them says, "Male illo tempore Britanni audiebant:" ideo, epigrammate 112,—"Nemo bonus Brito est."

§ Quid loquar de cæteris nationibus cum ipse adolescentulus in Gallia viderim Scotos, gentem Britannicam, humanis vesci carnibus."—*S. Hieron contra Jovinian*, lib. ii.

‖ Thus in the Latin version of Ptolemy:—"Atqui et ipse Marianus Tyrius mercatorum relationibus nequaquam fidem adhibere videtur. Itaque Philemonis sermoni longitudinem Insulæ Hiberniæ ab ortu occasum usque xx. dierum esse tradenti haudquaquam adstipulatur, dicens hoc eos a mercatoribus percepisse, hos enim ait veritatis in derogationem haud curari, intentos mercimoniis."—*Geog.* lib. ii. c. 11.

¶ "Soyez seul, et arrivez, par quelque accident, chez un peuple inconnu, si vous voyez une pièce de monnoie, comptez que vous êtes arrivé chez une nation policée."—*Montesquieu*, l. xviii. c. 15.

** By the same ready process, another Irish monarch, Aepy Fuarchis, who reigned A. M. 3508, was made the inventor of Currachs, or wicker boats; his name, Fuarchis, signifying a boat not well joined.—*Ogy.* part iii. chap. 34.

beginning of the sixteenth century, the celebrated Book of Ballymote* (a compilation from the works of some earlier Irish seanachies,) was purchased by a certain Hugh O'Donnel for 140 milch cows;—a transaction combining in itself, rather curiously, at once the high estimation of literary merit which marks an advanced state of society, and a mode of payment belonging only to its very earliest ages.

While in their home commerce such evidence of backwardness presents itself, their means of carrying on a foreign trade appear to have been equally limited. For any distance beyond their own and the immediately neighbouring coasts, the resources of their navigation were but rude and insecure, consisting chiefly of those large, open boats, called Curraghs, which, like the light vessels of osier and leather used by the ancient Liburnians, were composed of a frame-work of wood and wicker, covered over with the skins of cattle or of deer. These boats, though in general navigated by oars, were capable of occasionally carrying masts and sails,—the latter being, like those of the Veneti, formed of hides. There was also in use, among the Irish, for plying upon the rivers and lakes small canoes, made out of trees; and it must have been of this sort of rude craft that Giraldus spoke, when he said that the tail of a live salmon could upset them.† That the curraghs were considered to a certain degree seaworthy, may be judged from the expeditions in which they were sometimes employed. It was in a skiff of this kind, described by Columba's biographer as furnished with sails, that St. Cormac is said to have more than once ventured forth in quest of some lonely isle in the ocean where he might fix his retreat;‡ and in one of these exploratory cruises he was out of sight of land, we are told, for fourteen days and nights.§

It is among the many remarkable proofs of that identity of character and customs which the Irish preserved through so many ages, that, so far back as the time when Himilco visited these seas, the very same sort of boats were in use among the natives; and that the holy men of the "Sacred Island" were then seen passing, in their hide-covered barks, from shore to shore, in the very same manner as was practised by her saints and missionaries more than a thousand years after.‖

A reverend historian cited in a preceding part of this work, has described, as we have seen, with much pomp and circumstance, the fleet of the Irish monarch, Nial Giallach, with the shield of the admiral at the mast-head, the rowers chiming their oars to the music of the harp, and other such probable appurtenances. On the same poetical authority from whence this description is derived, we are told by another writer of the names given by the Irish mariners to particular stars, by whose light they were accustomed to steer in their voyages,—such as the Guide to Erin, the Guide to Scandinavia, the Guide of Night.¶ Such false pictures of manners, put forth in grave works, and on such authority as that of Ossian, are little less than deliberate insults on a reader.

To the facts above stated, as apparently inconsistent with the notion of the Irish having been, in those times, a trading people, may be opposed, on the other side, the actual traces still remaining of ancient causeways and roads throughout the country.** One great commercial road, having walls, we are told, on each side, strengthened with redoubts, was carried from Galway along the south boundaries of the people called anciently the Auteri, and along by the borders of the counties of Meath and Leinster, to Dublin.†† If the conjecture of Whitaker, too, be adopted, that the great road, called the Watling Street, extending from Dover, through London, as far as Anglesey in Wales, was originally denominated, by the ancient Britons, the Way of the Irish, it is equally probable that the causeway from Galway to Dublin formed a part of the same line of conveyance; and that articles of commerce from the western and central parts of Ireland may have been, by this route, transmitted through Britain, and into Gaul.

Among the tests by which the civilization of a people may be judged, their degree of

* For an account of the origin and transmission of this celebrated Book of Records, which was chiefly compiled by Solomon O'Drum, see Trans. Iberno-Celt. Society.

† Giraldus speaks more particularly of the British curragh.—(*Descript. Camb.*) "Cum autem naviculam salmo injectus cauda fortiter percusserit non absque periculo plerumque vecturam priter et vectorem evertit."

‡ Eremum in oceano quærere.

§ Nam cum ejus navis a terris per quatuordecem æstei temporis dies totidemque noctes, plenis, velis Austro flante vento, ad septentrionalis plagan cæli directo excurrere cursu.—*Adamnan. De S. Columb. Abbate Hionæ.*

‖ Sed rei ad miraculum
Navigia junctis semper aptant pellibus,
Corioque vastum sæpe percurrent salum.
Fest. Avien, Ora Maritim.

¶ Armstrong's Gaelic Dictionary.

** See Brewer, Introduct., for remarks on the vestiges of "ecclesiastical and commercial paved roads still observable in several parts of Ireland." "These public ways," he adds, "appear to have led from such seaports as were formerly of principal consideration to the interior of the country."

†† Wood, Primitive Origin of the Irish, p. 96.

advancement in the art of architecture is, perhaps, one of the least fallible; but here again the historian is encountered by the same contrasts and inconsistencies,—not merely between tradition and existing visible evidence, but also between the several remaining monuments themselves, of which some bespeak all the rudeness of an infant state of society, while others point to a far different origin, and stand as marks of a tide of civilization long since ebbed away. In the geography of Ptolemy, we find a number of Irish cities enumerated, on some of which he even bestows the epithet illustrious or distinguished;* and intimates that, in two of them, the cities Hybernis and Rheba, celestial observations had been made. But though it is by no means improbable that, in the time of those more ancient geographers from whom Ptolemy is known to have drawn his materials, such cities may have existed, his testimony on this point is to be received with caution; as in Germany, where, at the time when Tacitus wrote, no other habitations were known than detached huts and caves, this geographer, who published his work but about half a century later, has contrived to conjure up no less than ninety cities. In the same manner, any inference that might be drawn in favour of the civilization of Ireland, from the supposition that those observations of the length of the solstitial days, by which the latitudes of the Irish cities were determined, had been really taken in those cities themselves, would prove, most probably, fallacious; as it is supposed that but few of the latitudes given by Ptolemy were the result of actual astronomical observation.†

Of those ancient Raths, or Hill-fortresses, which formed the dwellings of the old Irish chiefs, and belonged evidently to a period when cities were not in existence, there are to be found numerous remains throughout the country. This species of earthen work is distinguished from the artificial mounds, or trumuli, by its being formed upon natural elevations, and always surrounded by a rampart. Within the area thus enclosed, which was called the Rath, stood the habitations of the chieftain and his family, which were, in general, small buildings constructed of earth and hurdles, or having, in some instances, walls of wood upon a foundation of earth. In outward shape, as I have said, these dwellings of the living resembled those mounds which the Irish raised over their dead; and it is conjectured of the ancient earthen works on the Curragh of Kildare, that while the larger rath was the dwelling of the ancient chieftains of that district, the small entrenchments formed their cemetery or burial-place. If thus uncivilized were the habitations of the great dynasts of those days, it may be imagined what were the abodes of the humbler classes of the community;—though here, unfortunately, the imagination is not called upon for any effort; as, in the cottier's cabin of the present day, the disgraceful reality still exists: and two thousand years have passed over the hovel of the Irish pauper in vain.

A degree still lower, however, on the scale of comfort, would have been the lot of the ancient Irish, were it true, as Ledwich and others have asserted, that they lived chiefly, in the manner of the Troglodytes, in subterranean caves. That some of those caverns, of which so great a number, both artificial and natural, have been discovered throughout Ireland, may have been used as places of refuge for the women and children during times of danger and invasion, appears to be highly probable. We find some of them described as divided into apartments, and even denoting an attempt at elegance in their construction. They have also sometimes sustaining walls of dry stone-work, to confine the sides and support the flags which form the ceiling. But though they are pronounced to have been evidently subterranean houses, it is difficult to conceive human beings reduced to such abodes.‡

It was among a people thus little removed from the state of the Germans in the time of Tacitus, that the Palaces of Tara and Emania, as authentic records leave us but little room to doubt, displayed their regal halls, and, however skepticism may now question their architectural merits, could boast the admiration of many a century in evidence of their grandeur. That these edifices were merely of wood is by no means conclusive either against the elegance of their structure, or the civilization, to a certain degree, of those

* Της δε Ιουερνιας νησου αι επισημοι πολεις.

† "Quant à la durée du jour solstitial, nous avons deja dit, et nous verrons occasion de prouver encore, que la très grande partie de ces espèces de déterminations contenues dans le huitième livre de Ptolémée n'étoit le résultat d'aucune observation astronomique, et qu'elle n'étoit conclue que d'après les latitudes adoptées de son tems; ainsi on ne peut leur accorder aucune confiance quand elles ne sont pas apuyées sur le témoignage de quelques autres écrivains."—*Gosselin, Recherches sur la Géographie des Anciens.*

‡ "Some of them are excavated into the hard gravel, with the flags resting on no other support; and so low that you can only sit erect in them; that is, from three to four feet from the floor to the ceiling. I have not seen any higher than four feet. . . . . The tradition of the country makes them granaries; but for granaries they could never have been intended, as it would have been very difficult to convey grain into them, through long and narrow passages, not more than two feet square."—*Description of a remarkable Building &c., by F. C. Bland, Trans. R. Irish Acad.* vol. xiv.

See, for similar "hiding-pits," as he calls them, among the Britons, King Muniment, Antiq. book i. chapt. I.

who erected them. It was in wood that the graceful forms of Grecian architecture first unfolded their beauty; and there is reason to believe that, at the time when Xerxes, invaded Greece, most of her temples were still of this perishable material.

Not to lay too much stress, however, on these boasted structures of ancient Ireland, of which there is but dry and meager mention by her annalists, and most hyperbolical descriptions by her bards, there needs no more striking illustration of the strong contrast which her antiquities present, than that, in the very neighbourhood of the earthen rath and the cave, there should rise proudly aloft those wonderful Round Towers, bespeaking, in their workmanship and presumed purposes, a connexion with religion and science, which marks their builders to have been of a race advanced in civilization and knowledge,—a race different, it is clear, from any of those who are known, from time to time, to have established themselves in the country, and, therefore, most probably, the old original inhabitants, in days when the arts were not yet strangers on their shores.

There are yet a few other facts, strongly illustrative of this peculiar view of our antiquities, to which it may be worth while briefly to advert. Respecting the dress of the ancient Irish, we have no satisfactory information. In an account given of them by a Roman writer of the third century, they are represented as being half naked;* and the Briton Gildas, who wrote about three hundred years after, has drawn much the same picture of them.† It was only in battle however, that they appear to have presented themselves in this barbarian fashion; and a similar custom prevailed also among the ancient Britons and Picts. But, though no particulars of the dress of the Irish, in those remote times, have reached us, enough may be collected from the accounts of a later period, when they had become more known to Europe, to satisfy us that the Milesian lord of the rath and the plebeian of the hovel had as little advanced on the scale of civilization in their dress as in their dwellings; and that, while the latter was most probably clothed, like the lower order of Britons, in sheepskin, the chief himself wore the short woollen mantle, such as was customary, at a later period, among his countrymen, and which, according to some authorities, reached no farther than the elbows; leaving, like the Rheno, or short mantle of the ancient Germans,‡ the remainder of the body entirely naked. There is reason to believe, however, that at that time, as well as subsequently, they may have worn coverings for the thighs and legs, or at least that sort of petticoat, or *fallin*, as it was called, which is known to have been worn, as well as the braccæ, by the Irish, in the time of Giraldus Cambrensis.§

Such having been the rude state of the ancient Irish, within any range of time to which our knowledge of them extends, it remains to be asked, to whom then, to what race or period, could have belonged those relics of an age of comparative refinement, those curious and costly ornaments of dress, some of the purest gold, elaborately wrought, and others of silver, which have been discovered, from time to time, in different parts of Ireland, having been dug up out of fields and bogs where they must have lain hidden for ages?‖ Nor is it only of ornaments for the person that these precious remains consist; as there are found also among them instruments supposed to have been connected with religious worship, which are said to be of the finest gold, without any alloy, and to have, some of them, handles of silver, chased with plated gold.¶ In like manner, a variety of

* Adhuc semi-nudi.—*Eumen. Panegyric. Vet.*

† Magis vultus pillus quam corporum pudenda, pudendisque proxima, vestibus tegentes.—*Gildas.*

‡ Pellibus aut parvis rhenonum tergismentis utuntur, magna corporis parte nuda.—*Cæs. de Bell. Gall.* 1. vi. c. 21.

§ In their dress, as well as in most other respects, to attempt to distinguish very definitely between the Celts and Teutons will be found a vain and fallacious task. We have seen that the Irish and Gaulish Celts were fond of variegated dresses; and so, it appears, were the Lombards and Anglo-Saxons. "Vestimenta (says Diaconus, l. iv. c. 7.,) qualia Angli-Saxones habere solent, ornata institis latioribus, vario colore contextis." The braccæ of the Irish were, like those of the Germans, tight, while the Sarmatians and Batavians prefurred them large and loose.

"Et qui te laxis imitantur, Sarmata, braccis
Vangiones, Batavique truces." *Lucan*, l. i. 430.

‖ "Within the limits of my own knowledge," says the Rev. W. Hamilton, "golden ornaments have been found to the amount of near one thousand pounds"—*Letters Concerning the Coast of Antrim.*

The superior richness of the urns and ornaments discovered in Ireland, compare with those found in the English barrows, is fully acknowledged by Sir Richard Hoare. "The Irish urns were," he says, "in general, more ornamented," and the articles of gold, also, "richer and more numerous."—*Tour in Ireland, General Remarks.*

¶ See Gough's Camden, vol. iv. Collectan. Hibern. vol. iv. Among other curious Irish remains, bishop Pocoke produced to the Antiquarian Society a bracelet, or armilla, of fine gold. See drawing of this and a gold bracelet in Gough, vol. iv. pl. 14. Also plate 12. for some curious instruments, supposed by Pocoke to be fibulæ, while Simon and Vallancey are both of opinion that they were pateræ, used by the ancient Druids. Among the most beautiful of the ornaments discovered in Ireland have been those golden torques or collars, supposed to have been worn by the Irish Druids, as, according to Strabo, they were by the Gauls. One of these, of delicate workmanship, and of the purest gold, is in the possession of the Marquis of Langsdowne.

swords and other weapons* have been discovered, the former of which would seem to have been fabricated before iron had been brought into use for such purposes, as they are all of a mixed metal, chiefly copper, admitting of a remarkably high polish, and of a temper to carry a very sharp edge.

To attempt to reconcile,—even on the grounds already suggested, of the anomolous character of the people,—the civilized tastes, the skill of metallurgy, the forms of worship, which these various articles, in their several uses, imply, with such a state of things as prevailed in Ireland during the first ages of Christianity, appears altogether impossible; and the sole solution of this and other such contradictions, in the ancient history of the Irish, is that, at the time when they first became known to the rest of Europe, they had been long retrograding in civilization; that, whether from the inroads of rude northern tribes, or the slowly demoralizing effects of their own political institutions, they had fallen, like other once civilized nations, into eclipse; and though, with true Celtic perseverance, still clinging to their old laws and usages, their Assemblies at Tara, their Colleges of Bards, the Great Psalter of their Antiquaries, yet preserving of the ancient fabric little more than the shell, and, amidst all these skeletons of a bygone civilization, sinking fast into barbarism. This view of the matter seems so remarkably confirmed by that interval of ignorance, and even oblivion, as to the state and fortunes of Ireland, which succeeded to the times of the geographer Pytheas, of Eratosthenes, and the Tyrian authorities of Ptolemy. By all these, and more especially the latter, the position and localities of that island appear to have been far better known than by Strabo or any of the later Greek authorities,†—a circumstance to be explained only by the supposition that those ties of intercourse, whether commercial or religious, which the Irish once maintained, it is clear, with other nations, had during this interval been interrupted, and all the light that had flowed from those sources withdrawn. Through a nearly similar course of retrogradation we shall find them again doomed to pass, after their long and dark suffering under the yoke of the Danes, when, exhausted not more by this scourge than by their own internal dissensions, they sunk from the eminent station they had so long held in the eyes of Europe, and fell helplessly into that state of abasement, and almost barbarism, in which their handful of English conquerors found them.

In the state of society which prevailed in Ireland, in the middle ages, when it differed but little, probably, from that of the period we are now considering, an eminent historian has discovered some points of resemblance to the picture represented to us of the Homeric age of Greece;‡ and it is certain that the style of living, as described by Homer, in the palace of Ulysses, the riot and revel in the great hall, which was the scene of the cooking as well as of the feasting,—the supposed beggar admitted of the party, and, not least, the dunghill lying in the path from the court-gate to the door,§ might all find a parallel in the mansions of Irish chieftains, even to a later period than that assigned by the historian.

Among the numerous other vestiges still remaining of an age of civilization in Ireland, far anterior to any period with which her history makes us acquainted, should not be forgotten those extraordinary coal-works of Ballycastle, on the coast of Antrim, which are pronounced to have been wrought in times beyond even the reach of tradition,‖ and which a writer, by no means indulgent to the claims of Irish antiquities, conjectures, from the "marks of ancient operations" which they exhibit, to have been the work of some of the very earliest colonists of the country.¶ The last resource with certain theorists, respect-

* "One circumstance as to the swords seems to be decisive:—they are as exactly and as minutely to every apparent mark the same with the swords of Sir W. Hamilton's collection, now in the British Museum, as if they came out of the same armory. The former found in the field of Cannæ are said to be Carthagenian; these, therefore, by parity of reasoning may likewise be said to have been of the same people. *Governor Pownal's Account of some Irish Antiquities to the Society of Antiquarians*, 1774. "What makes these brazen swords such a valuable remnant to the Irish antiquarian is, they serve to corroborate the opinion that the Phœnicians once had footing in this kingdom."—*Campbell's Philosoph. Survey of the South of Ireland.*

† Pytheam præterea increpat Strabo ut mendacem, qui Hiberniam ac Uxisamam (Ushant) ad occidentum ponit a Gallia cum hæc omnia, ait *ad Septentrionem vergant*. Itaque veteres geographi Hibernias situm definiunt melius quam scriptores seculi aurei Augusti, Himilco et Phœnices melius quam Græci vel Romani! *Rer. Script. Hib.* prol. i. xii.

‡ Mitford, History of Greece, vol. i.

§ Odyss. lib. vii.

‖ "The antiquity of this work is pretty evident from hence, that there does not remain the most remote tradition of it in the country; but it is still more strongly demonstrated from a natural process which has taken place since its formation: for the sides and pillars were found covered with sparry incrustations, which the present workmen do not observe to be deposited in any definite portion of time."—*Rev. W. Hamilton's Letters concerning the Coast of Antrim.*

¶ "The superior intelligence of this people (the Damnii or Danaans) and of the Clanna Rhobnig, considered with Tacitus's account of the trade of Ireland, induce me to suppose that the coal-works at Ballycastle, on the northern coast, which exhibit marks of ancient operations, had been worked by either or both."—*Wood's Inquiry into the Primitive Inhabitants of Ireland.*

The following evidence on this subject is worthy of attention:—"If we may judge from the number of ancient mine excavations which are still visible in almost every part of Ireland, it would appear that an

ing our antiquities, is to attribute all such works to the Danes; and to this people the ancient coal-works of Ballycastle, as well as all the other mine excavations throughout Ireland, have been assigned. But the scanty grounds assumed for such a conjecture, and the utter improbability that a people, harassed as were the Danes, and never, at any period, in peaceable possession of the country, should have found time for such slow and laborious operations of peace, has been already by various writers convincingly demonstrated.

Postponing the consideration of some other usages and characteristics of the Pagan Irish to a somewhat later period, when, remaining still unchanged, the materials for illustrating them will be found more ample and authentic, I shall here only advert to one or two points connected with their knowledge of the useful arts and manner of living, respecting which information, however scanty, is to be found in the writings of the ancients. Those who regard Mela as sufficient authority for the barbarous habits of the people, will not, of course, reject his evidence as to the exercise among them of agriculture and grazing:—"The climate of Iverna," says this geographer, "is unfavourable to the ripening of seeds; but so luxuriant in pasture, not only plenteous, but sweet, that the cattle fill themselves in but a small part of the day, and, unless restrained from the pasture, would burst by over-eating."*

Another favourite witness of the anti-Irish school, Solinus, thus speaks of the military weapons of the old natives:—"Those among them who study ornament, are in the habit of adorning the hilts of their swords with the teeth of sea-animals, which they burnish to the whiteness of ivory; for the chief glory of those people lies in their arms."†

We have already seen that numbers of swords, made of brass, have been found in different parts of the country; and of these some are averred to be exactly of the same description with the swords found on the field of Cannæ, which are in Sir William Hamilton's collection. Swords similar to these have been discovered also in Cornwall, and Count Caylus has given an engraving of one, of the same kind, which he calls Gladius Hispaniensis, and which came, as it appears, from Herculaneum. It has been thought not improbable that all these weapons, the Irish as well as the others, were of the same Punic or Phœnician origin, and may be traced to those colonies on the coast of Spain which traded anciently with the British isles. There are said to have been likewise discovered some scythe-blades of bronze, such as were attached anciently to the wheels of war chariots;‡ the use of that Asiatic mode of warfare having prevailed formerly, we are told, in Ireland as well as in Britain. That for some parts of their armour, more especially their wicker shields, and bows with short arrows, the Irish were indebted to their Scythic conquerors, the Scots, appears by no means unlikely.§ But the most ancient remains‖ of their weapons are the stone hatchets, and also those heads of arrows¶ and spears, some of flint, and others pointed with bones, the latter resembling those which, for want of iron, were used, as Tacitus tells us, by the ancient Finlanders.**

ardent spirit for mining adventure must have pervaded this country at some very remote period. In many cases, no tradition that can be depended upon now remains of the time or people by whom the greater part of these works were originally commenced." This experienced engineer adds:—"It is worthy of remark, that many of our mining excavations exhibit appearances similar to the surface-workings of the most ancient mines in Cornwall, which are generally attributed to the Phœnicians."—*Report to the Royal Dublin Society, on the Metallic Mines of Leinster, in 1828, by Richard Griffith, Esq.*

* Iverna est cæli ad maturanda semina iniqui; verum adeo luxuriosa herbis non lætis modo, sed etiam dulcibus, ut se exiguâ parte dici pecora impleant et nisi pabulo prohibeantur, diutibus pasta dissiliant.—*De Situ Orbis.*

† Qui student cultui dentibus marinarum belluarum insigniunt ensium capulos, candicant enim ad eburneam claritatem; nam præcipua viris gloria est in telis.—*Solinus, Polyhist.*

‡ Meyrick on Ancient Armour, vol. i. One of these scythe-blades of bronze he describes as thirteen inches long.

§ Ware's Antiquities, chap. 2.

‖ "Hammers of stone have been found in the copper-mines of Kerry; heads of arrows, made of flint, are often dug up, and are now esteemed the work of fairies."—*Collectan.* No. 2.

¶ According to a work quoted by Meyrick, these arrows must have been more ancient than even the time of the Phœnicians. "The inhabitants of Britain and Ireland, previous to their intercourse with the Phœnicians, had merely bows, with arrows of reed, headed with flint, or pointed with bones, sharpened to an acute edge." No sooner, however, did the Phœnicians effect an amicable interchange with these islanders, than they communicated to them the art of manufacturing their warlike instruments of metal.—*Costume of the Orig. Inhab. of the British Isles.*

** Sola in sagittis spes, quas, inopia ferri, ossibus asperant.—*German*, c. 46.

CHAPTER X.

INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY INTO IRELAND.

THE period of Irish history on which we are now about to enter, and of which the mission of St. Patrick forms the principal feature, will be found to exhibit, perhaps, as singular and striking a moral spectacle as any the course of human affairs ever yet presented. A community of fierce and proud tribes, for ever warring among themselves, and wholly secluded from all the rest of the world, with an ancient hierarchy entrenched in its own venerable superstitions, and safe from the weakening infusion of the creeds of Greece or Rome, would seem to present as dark and intractable materials for the formation of a Christian people as any that could be conceived. The result proves, however, the uncertainty of such calculations upon national character, while it affords an example of that ready pliancy, that facility in yielding to new impulses and influences, which, in the Irish character, is found so remarkably combined with a fond adherence to old usages and customs, and with that sort of retrospective imagination which for ever yearns after the past.

While, in all other countries, the introduction of Christianity has been the slow work of time, has been resisted by either government or people, and seldom effected without a lavish effusion of blood; in Ireland, on the contrary, by the influence of one humble but zealous missionary, and with but little previous preparation of the soil by other hands, Christianity burst forth, at the first ray of apostolic light, and, with the sudden ripeness of a northern summer, at once covered the whole land. Kings and princes, when not themselves among the ranks of the converted, saw their sons and daughters joining in the train without a murmur. Chiefs, at variance in all else, agreed in meeting beneath the Christian banner; and the proud Druid and Bard laid their superstitions meekly at the foot of the cross; nor, by a singular blessing of Providence—unexampled, indeed, in the whole history of the church—was there a single drop of blood shed on account of religion, through the entire course of this mild Christian revolution, by which, in the space of a few years, all Ireland was brought tranquilly under the dominion of the Gospel.*

By no methods less gentle and skilful than those which her great Apostle employed, could a triumph so honourable, as well to himself as to his nation of willing converts, have been accomplished. Landing alone, or with but a few humble followers, on their shores, the circumstances attending his first appearance (of which a detailed account shall presently be given) were of a nature strongly to affect the minds of a people of lively and religious imaginations; and the flame, once caught, found fuel in the very superstitions and abuses which it came to consume. Had any attempt been made to assail, or rudely alter, the ancient ceremonies and symbols of their faith, all that prejudice in favour of old institutions, which is so inherent in the nation, would at once have rallied around their primitive creed; and the result would, of course, have been wholly different. But the same policy by which Christianity did not disdain to win her way in more polished countries, was adopted by the first missionaries in Ireland; and the outward forms of past error became the vehicle through which new and vital truths were conveyed.† The days devoted, from old times, to Pagan festivals, were now transferred to the service of the Christian cause. The feast of Samhin, which had been held annually at the time of the vernal equinox, was found opportunely to coincide with the celebration of Easter; and the fires lighted up by the Pagan Irish, to welcome the summer solstice, were continued afterwards, and even down to the present day, in honour of the eve of St. John.

* Giraldus Cambrensis has been guilty of either the bigotry or the stupidity of adducing this bloodless triumph of Christianity among the Irish, as a charge against that people;—Pro Christi ecclesia corona martyri nulla. Non igitur inventus est in partibus istis, qui ecclesiæ surgentis fundamenta sanguinis effusione cementaret: non fuit qui facerit hoc bonem; non fuit useque ad unum."—*Topog. Hib. dist.* iii. cap. 29.

† The very same policy was recommended by Pope Gregory to Augustin and his fellow-labourers in England. See his letter to the Abbot Mellitus, in Bede, (lib. i. c. 30,) where he suggests that the temples of the idols in that nation ought not to be destroyed. "Let the idols that are in them," he says, "be destroyed; let holy water be made, and sprinkled in the said temples; let altars be erected, and relics placed. For if those temples are well built, it is requisite that they be converted from the worship of devils to the service of the true God; that the nation, not seeing those temples destroyed, may remove error from their hearts, and knowing and adoring the true God, may more willingly resort to the same places they were wont.... For there is no doubt but that it is impossible to retrench all at once from obdurate minds, because he who endeavours to ascend the highest place, rises by degrees or steps, and not by leaps." See Hume's remarks on this policy of the first missionaries, vol. i. chap. 1.

With similar views, the early Christians selected, in general, for the festivals of their church, such days as had become hallowed to the Pagans by the celebration of some of their religious solemnities.

At every step, indeed, the transition to a new faith was smoothed by such coincidences or adoptions. The convert saw, in the baptismal font, where he was immersed, the sacred well at which his fathers had worshipped. The Druidical stone on the "high places" bore, rudely graved upon it the name of the Redeemer; and it was in general by the side of those ancient pillar towers—whose origin was even then, perhaps, a mystery—that, in order to share in the solemn feelings which they inspired, the Christian temples arose. With the same view, the Sacred Grove was anew consecrated to religion, and the word Dair, or oak, so often combined with the names of churches in Ireland, sufficiently marks the favourite haunts of the idolatry which they superseded.* In some instances, the accustomed objects of former worship were associated, even more intimately, with the new faith; and the order of Druidesses, as well as the idolatry which they practised, seemed to be revived, or rather continued, by the Nuns of St. Bridget, in their inextinguishable fire and miraculous oak at Kildare.†

To what extent Christianity had spread, in Ireland, before the mission of St. Patrick, there are no very accurate means of judging. The boast of Tertullian, that, in his time, a knowledge of the Christian faith had reached those parts of the British isles yet unapproached by the Romans, is supposed to imply as well Ireland as the northern regions of Britain;‡ nor are there wanting writers, who, placing reliance on the assertion of Eusebius, that some of the apostles preached the Gospel in the British isles, suppose St. James the elder to have been the promulgator of the faith among the Irish,§—just as St. Paul, on the same hypothesis, is said to have communicated it to the Britons.

But though unfurnished with any direct evidence as to the religious state of the Irish in their own country, we have a proof how early they began to distinguish themselves, on the continent, as Christian scholars and writers, in the persons of Pelagius, the eminent heresiarch, and his able disciple Celestius. That the latter was a Scot, or a native of Ireland, is almost universally admitted; but of Pelagius it is, in general, asserted that he was a Briton, and a monk of Bangor, in Wales. There appears little doubt, however, that this statement is erroneous, and that the monastery to which he belonged was that of Bangor, or rather Banchor, near Carrickfergus. Two of the most learned, indeed, of all the writers, respecting the heresy which bears his name, admit Pelagius, no less than his disciple, to have been a native of Ireland.‖

By few of the early Christian heresiarchs was so deep an impression made on their own times, or such abundant fuel for controversy bequeathed to the future, as by this remarkable man, Pelagius, whose opinions had armed against him all the most powerful theologians of his day, and who yet extorted, even from his adversaries, the praise of integrity and talent. The very bitterness with which St. Jerome attacks him, but shows how deeply he felt his power;¶ while the eulogies so honourably bestowed upon him by his great opponent, St. Augustine, will always be referred to by the lovers of tolerance, as a rare instance of that spirit of fairness and liberality by which the warfare of religious controversy may be softened.**

* Thus Dairmagh, now called Durrogh, in the King's County, once the site of a celebrated monastery, signifies the Oak Grove of the Plain, or the Plain of the Oaks. The name of the ancient monastery, Doire-Calgaich, from whence the city of Derry was designated, recalls the memory of the Hill of Oaks, on which it was originally erected; and the chosen seat of St Bridget, Kildare, was but the Druid's Cell of Oaks converted into a Christian temple.

† See Giraldus, Topog. Hibern. dist. ii. cap. 34, 35, 36, 48. The Tales of Giraldus, on this subject, are thus rendered by a learned but fanciful writer, the author of Nimrod:—"St. Bridget is certainly no other than Vesta, or the deity of the fire-worshippers in a female form. The fire of St. Bridget was originally in the keeping of nine virgins; but in the time of Giraldus Cambrensis there were twenty, who used to watch alternate nights: but on the twentieth night, the man whose turn it was merely to throw on the wood, crying, "Bridget, watch thine own fire!"—in the morning the wood was found consumed, but the fire unextinguished. Nor, indeed, (saith Giraldus) hath it ever been extinguished during so many ages since that virgin's time; nor, with such piles of fuel as have been there consumed, did it ever leave ashes. The fire was surrounded by a fence, of form circular, like Vesta's temple—'Virgeo orbiculari sepe,'—which no male creature could enter and escape divine vengeance. An archer of the household of Count Richard jumped over St. Bridget's fence, and went mad; and he would blow in the face of whoever he met, saying, 'Thus did I blow St. Bridget's fire!' Another man put his leg through a gap in the fence, and was withered up."—Vol. ii.

‡ Britiannorum inaccessa Romanis loca, Christo verò subdita—*Lib. adv. Judæos.* cap. 7.

§ See the authorities collected on this point by Usher, Eccles. Primord. chap. i. xvi. Vincent de Beauvais thus asserts it:—"Nutu Dei Jacobus Hiberniæ oris appulsus verbum Dei prædicavit intrepidus, ubi septem discipulos eligisse fertur."—*Speculum Historiale*, lib. viii. c. 7. It has been well conjectured by Usher that this story has arisen from a confusion of Hibernia with Hiberia; the latter being one of the names of Spain, which country St. James is said to have visited.

‖ Garnier, in his Dissert. upon Pelagianism, and Vossius, in his Histor. Pelag. The latter says:—"Pelagius professione monachus, natione non Gallus Brito, ut Danæus putavit; nec Anglo-Britannus, ut scripsit Balæus, sed Scotus."—Lib. i. cap. 3.

¶ Among other reflections on the country of Pelagius, St. Jerome throws in his teeth the Irish flummery:—"Nec recordatur stolidissimus et Scotorum pultibus prægravatus."—In *Hieron Præfat.* lib. i. Upon this, Vossius remarks:—"Nam per *Scotorum pultibus prægravatum*, non alium intelligit quam Pelagium natione Scotum."—Lib. i. cap. 3.

** The following are a few of the passages, in which this praise, so creditable to both parties, is conveyed:—"Pelagii, viri, ut audio, sanctit et non parvo profectu Christiani."—*De Peccat. meritis ac remiss.* lib. iii. cap. 1.—"Eum qui noverunt loquuntur bonum ac prædicandum virum."—*Ib.* cap. 3. And again, "Vir ille tam egregiè Christianus."

The rank of Celestius, in public repute, though subordinate, of course, to that of his master, was not, in its way, less distinguished. So high was the popular estimate of his talents, that most of the writings circulated under the name of Pelagius, were supposed to have been in reality the production of his disciple's pen. We are told by St Augustine, indeed, that many of the followers of the heresy chose to style themselves, after the latter, Celestians; and St. Jerome, in one of his paroxysms of vituperation, goes so far as to call him "the leader of the whole Pelagian army."*

While yet a youth, and before he had adopted the Pelagian doctrines, Celestius had passed some time in a monastery on the continent, supposed to have been that of St. Martin of Tours, and from thence (A. D. 369) addressed to his parents, in Ireland, three letters, "in the form," as we are told, "of little books," and full of such piety, "as to make them necessary to all who love God. Among his extant works there is mentioned an epistle "On the Knowledge of Divine Law;" which, by some, is conjectured to have been one of those letters addressed by him to his parents.† But Vossius has shown, from internal evidence, that this could not have been the case; the epistle in question being, as he says, manifestly tinged with Pelagianism,‡ and therefore to be referred to a later date. The fact of Celestius thus sending letters to Ireland, with an implied persuasion, of course, that they would be read, affords one of those incidental proofs of the art of writing being then known to the Irish, which, combining with other evidence more direct, can leave but little doubt upon the subject. A country that could produce, indeed, before the middle of the fourth century, two such able and distinguished men as Pelagius and Celestius, could hardly have been a novice, at that time, in civilization, however secluded from the rest of Europe she had hiterto remained.

From some phrases of St. Jerome, in one of his abusive attacks on Pelagius, importing that the heresy professed by the latter was common to others of his countrymen, it has been fairly concluded that the opinions in question were not confined to these two Irishmen; but, on the contrary, had even spread to some extent among that people. It is, indeed, probable, that whatever Christians Ireland could boast at this period, were mostly followers of the peculiar tenets of their two celebrated countrymen; and the fact that Pelagianism had, at some early period, found its way into this country, is proved by a letter from the Roman clergy to those of Ireland, in the year 640, wherein, adverting to some indications of a growth of heresy, at that time, they pronounce it to be a revival of the old Pelagian virus.§

Already in Britain, where, at the period of which we are treating, Christianity had for more than a century, flourished,‖ the tenets of Pelagius had been rapidly gaining ground; and the mission of St. German and Lupus to that country, in the year 429, was for the express purpose of freeing it from the infection of this heresy. Among the persons who accompanied this mission, was the future apostle of Ireland, Patrick, then in his forty-second year. While thus occupied, the attention of these missionaries would naturally be turned to the state of Christianity in Ireland; and it was, doubtless, the accounts which they gave of the increasing number of Christians, in that country, as well as of the inroads already made upon them by the Pelagian doctrines, that induced pope Celestine to turn his attention to the wants of the Irish, and to appoint a bishop for the superintendence of their infant church. The person chosen for this mission "to the Scots believing in Christ" (for so it is specified by the chronicler¶) was Palladius, a deacon of the Roman church, at whose instance St. German had been sent by the pope to reclaim the erring Britons; and, whatever preachers of the faith, foreign or native, might have appeared previously in Ireland, it seems certain that, before this period, no hierarchy had been there instituted, but that in Palladius, the Irish Christians saw their first bishop.

For a short period, success appears to have attended his mission; and a zealous anti-Pelagian of that day, in his haste to laud the spiritual triumphs of the pope, prematurely

* "Pelagii licet discipulum tamen magistrum et ductorem exercitus."—*Epist. ad Ctesiphon*

† "Cælestius antequam dogma Pelagianum incurreret, imò adhuc adolescens scripsit ad parentes suos de monasterio epistolasin modum libellorum tres, omni Deum desideranti necessarias."—*Gennadius, Catal. Illust. Vir.* By Dr. O'Connor, this passage of Gennadius has been rather unaccountably brought forward, in proof of the early introduction of monastic institutions into Ireland. "Monachorum instituta toto fere seculo ante S. Patricii adventum, invecta fuisse in Hiberniam patet ex supra allatis de Cælestio, qui ab ipsa adolescentia monasterio se dicavit, ut scribit Genadius." But the mere fact of the Irishman Celestius having been in a monastery on the continent, is assuredly no proof of the introduction of monastic establishments into Ireland.—See *Prol.* i. lxxviii.

‡ Manifestè, Πελαγιαζει.

§ Et hoc quoque cognovimus, quod virus Pelagianæ hæreseos apud vos denuo reviviscit.

‖ British bishops had already been present at some continental councils: at that of Arles, in A. D. 314; and at the council of Nice, as is shown to be probable, (Antiq. of Churches, chap. ii.) in the year 325.

¶ "Ad Scotos in Christum credentes ordinatus a Papa Celestino Palladius primus Episcopus mittitur."—*Prosper. Chron. Bass. et Antioch. Cons.*

announced that the new missionary to the British isles, "while endeavouring to keep Britain Catholic, had made Ireland Christian."* The result, however, as regards the latter country, was by no means so prosperous. The few believers Palladius found or succeeded in making during his short stay, could ill protect him against the violence of the numbers who opposed him; and, after some unavailing efforts to obtain a hearing for his doctrine, he was forced to fly from the country, leaving behind him no other memorial of his labours than the adage traditional among the Irish, that "not to Palladius but to Patrick did God grant the conversion of Ireland." This ill-fated missionary did not live to report his failure at Rome; but being driven by a storm on the coast of North Britain, there died, it is said, at Fordun, in the district of Mearns.

Before entering on an account of St. Patrick's mission, a brief sketch of his life, previous to that period, may be deemed requisite. It will be seen that with him, as perhaps with most men who have achieved extraordinary actions, a train of preparation appears to have been laid, from the very outset, for the mighty work he was to accomplish. Respecting his birth-place, there has been much difference of opinion; the prevailing notion being that he was born at Alcluit, now Dunbarton, in North Britain.† It is only, however, by a very forced and false construction of some of the evidence on the subject, that any part of Great Britain can be assigned as the birth-place of the Saint; and his own Confession, a work of acknowledged genuineness, proves him to have been a native of the old Gallican, or rather Armoric Britain.‡ The country anciently known by this name comprised the whole of the north-west coasts of Gaul; and in the territory now called Boulogne, St. Patrick, it appears, was born. That it was on the Armorican coast he had been made captive, in his boyhood, all the writers of his life agree; and as it is allowed also by the same authorities that his family was resident there at the time, there arose a difficulty as to the cause of their migration thither from the banks of the Clyde, which the fact, apparent from his own statement, that Armorica was actually the place of his nativity disposes of satisfactorily. His family was, as he informs us, respectable, his father having held the office of Decurio, or municipal senator; though, as it appears, he afterwards entered into holy orders, and was a deacon. From a passage in the Letter of the Saint to Coroticus, it is supposed, and not improbably, that his family may have been of Roman origin; and the opinion that his mother, Conchessa, was a native of some part of the Gauls, is concurred in by all the old Irish writers.

The year of his birth has been likewise a subject of much variance and controversy; but the calculations most to be relied upon assign it to A. D. 387, which, according to his own statement of his having been, at the time when he was made captive, sixteen years of age, brings this latter event to the year 403, a period memorable in Irish history, when the monarch Nial of the Nine Hostages, after laying waste the coasts of Great Britain, extended his ravages to the maritime districts of Gaul.

On being carried by his captors to Ireland, the young Patrick was purchased, as a slave, by a man named Milcho, who lived in that part of Dalaradia which is now comprised within the county of Antrim. The occupation assigned to him was the tending of sheep; and his lonely rambles over the mountain and in the forest are described by himself as having been devoted to constant prayer and thought, and to the nursing of those deep devotional feelings which, even at that time, he felt strongly stirring within him. The mountain alluded to by him, as the scene of his meditations, is supposed to have been Sliebhmis, as it is now called, in Antrim. At length, after six years of servitude, the desire of escaping from bondage arose in his heart; a voice in his dreams, he says, told him that he "was soon to go to his own country," and that a ship was ready to convey him. Accordingly, in the seventh year of his slavery, he betook himself to flight, and, making his way to the south-western coast of Ireland, was there A. D. 403.

* Et ordinato Scotis episcopo, dum Romanam insulam studet servare Catholicam, fecit etiam Barbaram Christianam.—*Prosper. Lib. contra Collat.* cap. 41. This sanguine announcement was issued by Prosper, in a work directed against the semi Pelagians, when the true result of Palladius's mission had not yet reached him. With respect to the epithet "barbara," here applied to Ireland, it is well known that whatever country did not form a part of the Roman Empire, was, from ancient custom, so styled.

† Dr. O'Connor, who was of this opinion, takes also for granted that, as a native of Alcluid, or Dunbarton, St. Patrick might have been claimed as Scoto-Irish; Alcluid having been, as he asserts, the seat of the Irish kings in Albany. "Alcluid, Rupes Cludensis, hodie Dunbarton, quæ fuit regia arx regum Hibernorum Albaniæ." He adds:—"Natus est itaque S. Patricius inter Hibernos in præcipuo Hibernorum propugnaculo in Albania." Prol. i. xcviii. This surely, however, is incorrect. The city in question—the Rock of Clyde, as it was called—remained in the hands of the British so late as the days of Bede (l. i. c. 12.;) and it was, therefore, not for many centuries after the time of St. Patrick that it was taken possession of by the Scots.

‡ Patrem habui Calpornium diaconum, filium quondam Potiti presbyteri, qui fuit in vico *Bonavem Tabernie:* villulam Enon prope habuit ubi capturam dedi.—*Confess.* Doctor Lanigan has shown clearly that the place here mentioned, Bonavem, or Bonavem Tabernie, was in Armoric Gaul, being the same town as Boulogne-sur-Mer in Picardy.—See Eccles. Hist. chap. 2.

received, with some reluctance, on board a merchant vessel, which, after a voyage of three days, landed him on the coast of Gaul.*

A. D. 409 to 410. After indulging, for a time, in the society of his parents and friends, being naturally desirous of retrieving the loss of those years during which he had been left without instruction, he repaired to the celebrated monastery or college of St. Martin,† near Tours, where he remained four years, and was, it is believed, initiated there in the ecclesiastical state. That his mind dwelt much on recollections of Ireland, may be concluded from a dream which he represents himself to have had about this time, in which a messenger appeared to him, coming as if from Ireland, and bearing innumerable letters, on one of which were written these words, "The Voice of the Irish." At the same moment, he fancied that he could hear the voices of persons from the wood of Foclat, near the Western Sea, crying out, as if with one voice, "We entreat thee, holy youth, to come and walk still among us."—"I was greatly affected in my heart," adds the Saint, in describing this dream, "and could read no farther; I then awoke."‡ In these natural workings of a warm and pious imagination, described by himself thus simply,—so unlike the prodigies and miracles with which most of the legends of his life abound,—we see what a hold the remembrance of Ireland had taken of his youthful fancy, and how fondly he already contemplated some holy work in her service.

At the time when this vision occurred, St. Patrick was about thirty years old, and it was shortly after, we are told, that he placed himself under the spiritual direction of St. German of Auxerre, a man of distinguished reputation, in those times, both as a civilian and an ecclesiastic. From this period, there is no very accurate account of the Saint's studies or transactions, till, in the year 429, we find him accompanying St. German and Lupus, in their expedition to Britain, for the purpose of eradicating from that country the growing errors of Pelagianism. Nine years of this interval he is said to have passed in an island, or islands, of the Tuscan Sea; and the conjecture that Lérins was the place of his retreat seems, notwithstanding the slight geographical difficulty, by no means improbable. There had been recently a monastery established in that island, which became afterwards celebrated for the number of holy and learned persons whom it had produced; nor could the destined apostle have chosen for himself a retreat more calculated to nurse the solemn enthusiasm which such a mission required than among the pious and contemplative Solitaries of the small isle of Lérins.

The attention of Rome being at this time directed to the state of Christianity among the Irish,—most probably by the reports on that subject received from the British missionaries,—it was resolved by Celestine to send a bishop to that country, and Palladius was, as we have seen, the person appointed. The peculiar circumstances which fitted St. Patrick to take part in such a mission, and probably his own expressed wishes to that effect, induced St. German to send him to Rome with recommendations to the Holy Father. But, before his arrival, Palladius had departed for Ireland, and the hopeless result of his mission has already been related. Immediately on the death of this bishop, two or three of his disciples set out to announce the event to his successor St. Patrick, who was then on his way through Gaul. Having had himself consecrated bishop at Eboria, a town in the north-west of that country, the Saint proceeded on his course to the scene of his labours; and, resting but a short time in Britain,§ arrived in Ireland, as the Irish Annals inform us, in the first year of the pontificate of Sextus the Third.

A. D. 431.

His first landing appears to have been on the shore of Dublin: or, as it is described, "the celebrated port of the territory of the Evoleni," by which is supposed to have been meant the "portus Eblanorum" of Ptolemy, the present harbour of Dublin. After meeting with a repulse, at this and some other places in Leinster, the

A. D. 432.

* It is said in some of the lives of St. Patrick, that there was a law in Ireland, according to which slaves should become free in the seventh year, and that it was under this law he gained his liberty. The same writers add, that this was conformable to the practice of the Hebrews—more Hebræorum.—(Levit. xxv. 40, See on this point, Dr. Lanigan chap. iv. note 43.

† The monastic institution, says Mabillon, was introduced "in Hiberniam insulam per S. Patricium, S. Martini discipulum."

‡ The following is the Saint's description of this dream in his own homely Latin:—Et ibi scilicet vidi in visu, nocte, virum venientem quasi de Hiberione, cui nomen Victoricius, cum epistulis innumerabilibus, et dedit mihi unam ex illis, et legi principium epistolæ continentem Vox Hiberionacum. Et dum recitabam principium epistolæ putabam ipso momento audire vocem ipsurum qui erant juxta sylvan Focluti, quæ est prope mare occidentale. Et sic exclamaverunt quasi ex uno ore, Rogamus te, sancte puer, ut venias et adhuc ambules inter nos. Et valde conpunctus sum corde, et amplius non potui legere: et sic expergefactus sum."

§ During one of St. Patrick's visits to Britain, he is supposed to have preached in Cornwall. "By peristing in their Druidism," says Borlase, "the Britons of Cornwall drew the attention of St. Patrick this way, who, about the year 432, with twenty companions, halted a little on his way to Ireland on the shores of Cornwall, where he is said to have built a monastery. Whether St German was in Cornwall at this time, I cannot say; but (according to Usher) he was either in Cornwall or Wales, for St. Patrick is said, "ad præceptorem suum beatum Germanum divertisse, et apud Britannos in partibus Cornubiæ et Cambriæ aliquandiu subtitisse."—*Borlase, Antiq.* book iv. chap. x. sect. 2.

Saint, anxious, we are told, to visit the haunts of his youth, to see his old master Milcho, and endeavour to convert him to the faith, steered his course for East Ulster, and arrived with his companions at a port near Strangford, in the district now called the barony of Lecale. Here, on landing and proceeding a short way up the country, they were met by a herdsman, in the service of the lord of the district, who, supposing them to be sea-robbers or pirates, hastened to alarm the whole household. In a moment, the master himself, whose name was Dicho, made his appearance, attended by a number of armed followers, and threatening the destruction to the intruders. But on seeing St. Patrick, so much struck was the rude chief with the calm sanctity of his aspect, that the uplifted weapon was suspended, and he at once invited the whole of the party to his dwelling.—The impression which the looks of the Saint had made, his Christian eloquence but served to deepen and confirm; and not merely the pagan lord himself, but all his family became converts.

In an humble barn belonging to this chief, which was ever after called Sabhul Padruic, or Patricks Barn, the Saint celebrated divine worship; and we shall find that this spot, consecrated by his first spiritual triumph, continued to the last his most favourite and most frequented retreat.

Desirous of visiting his former abode, and seeing that mountain where he had so often prayed in the time of his bondage, he set out for the residence of his master Milcho, which appears to have been situated in the valley of Arcuil, in that district of Dalaradia inhabited by the Cruthene, or Irish Picts. Whatever might have been his hope of effecting the conversion of his old master, he was doomed to meet with disappointment; as Milcho, fixed and inveterate in his heathenism, on hearing of the approach of his holy visiter, refused to receive or see him.

After remaining some time in Down, to which county he had returned from Dalaradia, St. Patrick prepared, on the approach of Easter, to risk the bold, and as it proved, politic step of celebrating that great Christian festival in the very neighbourhood of Tara, where the Princes and States of the whole kingdom were to be about that time assembled.—Taking leave of his new friend Dicho, he set sail with his companions, and steering southwards arrived at the harbour, now called Colp, at the mouth of the Boyne. There leaving his boat, he proceeded with his party to the Plain of Preg, in which the ancient city of Tara was situated. In the course of his journey, a youth of family whom he baptized, and to whom on account of the kindly qualities of his nature, he gave the name of Benignus, conceived such an affection for him as to insist on being the companion of his way. This enthusiastic youth became afterwards one of his most favourite disciples, and, on his death, succeeded him as bishop of Armagh.

On their arrival at Slane, the Saint and his companions pitched their tents for the night, and as it was the eve of the festival of Easter, lighted at night-fall the paschal fire.* It happened that, on the same evening, the monarch Leogaire and the assembled princes were, according to custom, celebrating the pagan festival of La Bealtinne;† and as it was a law that no fires should be lighted on that night, till the great pile in the palace of Tara was kindled, the paschal fire of St. Patrick, on being seen from the heights of Tara, before that of the monarch, excited the wonder of all assembled. To the angry inquiries of Leogaire, demanding who could have dared to violate thus the law, his Magi or Druids are said to have made answer:—"This fire, which has now been kindled before our eyes, unless extinguished this very night, will never be extinguished throughout all time. Moreover, it will tower above all the fires of our ancient rites, and he who lights it will ere long scatter your kingdom."‡ Surprised and indignant, the monarch instantly despatched messengers to summon the offender to his presence; the princes seated themselves in a circle upon the grass to receive him; and, on his arrival, one alone among them, Herc, the son of Dego, impressed with reverence by the stranger's appearance, stood up to salute him.

That they heard with complacency, however, his account of the objects of his mission, appears from his preaching at the palace of Tara, on the following day, in the presence of the king and the States-General, and maintaining an argument against the most learned of the Druids, in which the victory was on his side. It is recorded, that the only

* "According to the ancient, as well as the modern ecclesiastical liturgy, fire was to be struck and lighted up, with solemn prayers and ceremonies, on Easter Eve, which fire was to be kept burning in the church lamps till the eve of Good Friday in the ensuing year."—*Milner's Inquiry, &c.*

† "Anciently, their times of repast were for the most part in the evening; from which custom that solemn feast at which Laogair, King of Ireland, entertained all the orders of the kingdom at Tarah ann. 455, is in the Ulster annals called the Cœna Temræ, the supper of Tarah; and it is remarkable that from this supper historians have fixed an era for the latter part of the times of that monarch's administration."—*Ware's Antiquities.*

‡ Hic ignis quem videmus, nisi extinctus fuerit hac nocte, non extinguetur in æturnum; insuper et omnes lumes nostræ consuetidinis super excellet; et ille qui incendit illum, regnum tuum dissipabit.—*Probus, S. Patric. Vita*, lib. i. c. 35.

person who, upon this occasion, rose to welcome him was the arch-poet Dubtach, who became his convert on that very day, and devoted, thenceforth, his poetical talents to religious subjects alone.* The monarch himself, too, while listening to the words of the apostle, is said to have exclaimed to his surrounding nobles, "It is better that I should believe than die;"—and appalled by the awful denouncements of the preacher, to have at once professed himself Christian.

There seems little doubt that the king Leogaire, with that spirit of tolerance which then pervaded all ranks, and so singularly smoothed the way to the reception of the Gospel in Ireland, gave full leave to the Saint to promulgate his new creed to the people, on condition of his not infringing the laws or peace of the kingdom. But that either himself, or his queen, had enlisted among the converts, there appears strong reason to question. In adducing instances of the great success with which God had blessed his mission, the Saint makes mention of the sons and daughters of men of rank, who, he boasts, had embraced the faith; but, with respect to the conversion of the king or queen, he maintains a total silence. It has been, indeed, in the higher regions of society that, from the very commencement of Christianity, its light has always encountered the most resisting medium; and, it is plain, from the narrative of St. Patrick, that, while he found the people everywhere docile listeners, his success with the upper or dominant caste was comparatively slow and limited; nor does it appear that, so late as the time when he wrote his Confession, the greater part of the kings and princes were yet converted.

Among the females however, even of this highest class, the lessons of peace and humility which he inculcated were always hailed with welcome; and he describes one noble young Scotic lady, whom he had baptized, as "blessed and most beautiful."† To the list of his royal female converts are to be added the sisters Ethnea and Fethlimia, daughters of the king Leogaire; whom he had the good fortune to meet with, in the course of a journey over the plain of Connaught, under circumstances full of what may be called the poesy of real life.

It was natural that the dream of "the Voice of the Irish," by which his imagination had many years before been haunted, should now, in the midst of events so exciting and gratifying, recur vividly to his mind; and we are told, accordingly,‡ that a wish to visit once more the scene of that vision,—to behold the wood, beside the Western Sea, from whence the voices appeared to come,—concurred with other more important objects to induce him to undertake this journey westwards. Resting for the night, on his way, at a fountain in the neighbourhood of the royal residence, Cruachan himself and his companions had begun, at day-break, to chant their morning service, when the two young princesses coming to the fountain, at this early hour, to bathe, were surprised by the appearance of a group of venerable persons all clothed in white garments and holding books in their hands. On their inquiring who the strangers were, and to what class of beings they belonged, whether celestial, æriel, or terrestrial, St. Patrick availed himself of the opportunity thus furnished of instructing them in the nature of the true God; and while answering their simple and eager questions as to where the God he worshipped dwelt, whether in heaven or on the earth, on mountains or in valleys, in the sea or in rivers, contrived to explain to them the leading truths of the Christian religion. Delighted with his discourse, the royal sisters declared their willingness to conform to any course of life that would render them acceptable to such a God as he announced; and, being then baptized by the holy stranger, at the fountain, became in a short time after consecrated virgins of the church.§

The Saint had, previously to his leaving Meath, attended the celebration of the Taltine Games, and taking advantage of the vast multitudes there assembled to forward his mighty work of conversion. In the course of this journey, likewise, to Connaught, he turned aside a little from the direct road, to visit that frightful haunt of cruelty and superstition, the Plain of Slaughter, in the county of Leitrim, where, from time immemorial, had stood the Druidical idol Crom-Cruach, called sometimes also Cean Groith, or Head of the Sun. This image, to which, as to Moloch of old, young children were offered up in sacrifice, had been an object of worship, we are told, with every successive colony by which the island had been conquered. For St. Patrick, however, was reserved the

* Carmina quæ quandam peregit in laudem falsorum deorum jam in usum meliorum mutans et linguam poemata clariora composuit in laudem Omnipotentis.—*Jocelin.*

Some writings under the name of this poet are to be found in the Irish collections. "An elegant hymn of his, (says Mr. O'Reilly) addressed to the Almighty, is preserved in the Felire Aenguis,, or Account of the Festivals of the Church, written by Angus Ceile-De, in the latter end of the eighth century." There is also in the book of Rights a very old poem attributed to him,in which he thus asserts the supremacy of his art:—"There is no right of visitation or headship (superiority) over the truly learned poet."—*Trans. Iberno-Celt. Society.*

† Et etiam una benedicta Scotta, genitiva, nobilis, pulcherrima, adulta erat quam ego baptizavi.—*Confess.*

‡ Jocelin, cap. iv.

§ Lives of St. Patrick, Probus, Tripartite, &c.

glory of destroying both idol and worship; and a large church was now erected by him in the place where these monstrous rites had been so long solemnized.*

His spiritual labours, in the West of Ireland, are all detailed with a fond minuteness by his biographers, and exhibit, with little exception, the very same flow of triumphant success which marked his progress from the beginning. Baptizing multitudes wherever he went, providing churches for the congregations thus formed, and ordaining priests from among his disciples, to watch over them,—his only rest from these various cares was during a part of the Lent season, when retiring alone to the heights of Mount Eagle,† or, as it has been since called, the Mountain of St. Patrick, he there devoted himself, for a time, to fasting and solitary prayer. While thus occupied, the various seafowl and birds of prey that would naturally be attracted to the spot, by the sight of a living creature in so solitary a place,‡ were transformed, by the fancy of the superstitious, into flocks of demons which came to tempt and disturb the holy man from his devotions. After this interval of seclusion, he proceeded northwards to the country then called Tiramalgaidh, the modern barony of Tyrawley.

He was now in the neighbourhood of the wood of Foclut, near the Ocean, from whence the voices of the Irish had called to him in his dream; and, whether good fortune alone was concerned in effecting the accomplishment of the omen, or, as is most likely, the thought that he was specially appointed to this place gave fresh impulse to his zeal, the signal success which actually attended his mission in this district sufficiently justified any reliance he might have placed upon the dream. Arriving soon after the death of the king of that territory, and at the moment when his seven sons, having just terminated a dispute concerning the succession, were, together with a great multitude of people, collected on the occasion, St. Patrick repaired to the assembly, and, by his preaching, brought over to the faith of Christ not only the seven princes, including the new king, but also twelve thousand persons more, all of whom he soon after baptized. It is supposed that to these western regions of Ireland the Saint alludes, in his Confession, where he stated that he had visited remote districts where no missionary had been before;—an assertion important, as plainly implying that, in the more accessible parts of the country, Christianity had, before his time, been preached and practised.

From this period, through the remainder of his truly wonder-working career, the records of his transactions present but little variety; his visits to Leinster, Ulster, and Munter being but repetitions of the course of success we have been contemplating,—a continuation of the same ardour, activity, and self-devotion on the part of the missionary himself, and the same intelligence, susceptibility, and teachableness on the part of most of his hearers.

Notwithstanding, however, the docile and devotional spirit which he found everywhere, among the lower classes, and the singular forbearance with which, among the highest, even the rejecters of his doctrine tolerated his preaching it, yet that his life was sometimes in danger appears from his own statements; and an instance or two are mentioned by his biographers, where the peril must have been imminent.§ On one of these occasions he was indebted for his life to the generosity of his charioteer, Odran; who, hearing of the intention of a desperate chieftain, named Failge, to attack the Saint when on his way through the King's County, contrived, under the pretence of being fatigued, to induce his master to take the driver's seat, and so, being mistaken for St. Patrick, received the lance of the assassin in his stead.‖ The death of this charioteer is made more memorable by the re-

* When we hear of Churches erected by St. Patrick, very many of which were certainly of much later foundation, we are not to understand such edifices as are so called in our days, but humble buildings made of hurdles or wattles, clay and thatch, according to the ancient fashion of Ireland, and which could be put together in a very short time."—*Lanigan*, chap. v. note 74.

† *Cruachan-aichle*, since called *Cruach Phadruic*, (Croagh Patrick, in Mayo) that is the heap or mountain of St. Patrick.

‡ "Multitudo avium venit circa illum, ita ut non posset videre faciem cœli et terræ ac maris propter aves. "Jocelin is the only biographer of St. Patrick that has spoken of the expulsion by him of serpents and other venomous creatures from Ireland. From his book this story made its way into other tracts, and even into some breviaries. Had such a wonderful circumstance really occurred, it would have been recorded in our Annals and other works long before Jocelin's time."—*Lanigan, Ecclesiast. Hist.* chap. v. note 108. The learned Colgan, in exposing the weakness of this story, alleges, that in the most ancient documents of Irish history, there is not the least allusion to venomous animals having ever been found in this country.

§ In his Confession, the Saint makes mention of the sufferings of himself and followers, and of "the precautions he took against giving occasion to a general persecution, using, among other means, that of making presents to the unconverted kings, some of whom, however, while obstinate themselves, allowed their sons to follow him:—"Interim præmia," he says, "dabam regibus proter quod dabam meredem filliis ipsorum qui mecum ambulant, et nihil comprehenderunt me cum comitibus meis."

‖ Among the specimens of Irish manuscripts given by Astle, there is one from a tract relating to this event:—"This specimen," says the writer, "is taken from an ancient manuscript of two tracts, relating to the old municipal laws of Ireland. The first contains the trial of Enna, brother of Laogarius, chief king of Ireland, for the murder of Oraine (Odran) chariot driver to St. Patrick, before Dumpthac, (Dubtach) the king's chief bard, and the sentence passed thereon, about the year 430."

markable circumstance, that he is the only martyr on record who, in the course of this peaceful crusade in Ireland, fell a victim by the hands of an Irishman. On another occasion, while visiting Lecale, the scene of his earliest labours, a design was formed against his life by the captain of a band of robbers, which he not only baffled by his intrepidity and presence of mind, but succeeded in converting the repentant bandit into a believer. Full of compunction, this man, whose name was Maccaldus, demanded of St. Patrick what form of penance he ought to undergo for his crimes; and the nature of the task which the Saint imposed upon him is highly characteristic of the enterprising cast of his own mind. The penitent was to depart from Ireland immediately; to trust himself, alone, to the waves, in a leathern boat, and taking with him nothing but a coarse garment, land on the first shore to which the wind might bear him, and there devote himself to the service of God. This command was obeyed; and it is added that, wafted by the wind to the Isle of Man, Maccaldus found there two holy bishops, by whom he was most kindly received, and who directed him in his penitential works with so much spiritual advantage, that he succeeded them in the bishopric of the island, and became renowned for his sanctity.

The most active foes St. Patrick had to encounter were to be found naturally among those *Magi* or *Druids*, who saw in the system he was introducing the downfall of their own religion and power. An attempt made against his life, shortly before his grand work of conversion in Tyrawley, is said to have originated among that priesthood, and to have been averted only by the interference of one of the convert princes. Among the civil class of the Literati, however, his holy cause found some devoted allies. It has been already seen that the arch-poet Dubtatch became very early a convert; and we find the Saint, in the course of a journey through Leinster, paying a visit to this bard's residence, in Hy-Kinsellagh, and consulting with him upon matters relating to the faith. The arch-poet's disciple, too, Fiech, was here admitted to holy orders by St. Patrick, and, becoming afterwards bishop of Sletty, left behind him a name as distinguished for piety as for learning.

The event, in consequence of which the Saint addressed his indignant letter to Coroticus, the only authentic writing, besides the Confession, we have from his hand, is supposed to have taken place during his stay on the Munster coast, about the year 450.* A British prince, named Coroticus, who, though professing to be a Christian, was not the less, as appears from his conduct, a pirate and persecutor, had landed with a party of armed followers, while Saint Patrick was on the coast, and set about plundering a large district in which, on the very day before, the Saint had baptized and confirmed a vast number of converts.† Having murdered several of these persons, the pirates carried off a considerable number of captives, and then sold them as slaves to the Picts and Scots, who were at that time engaged in their last joint excursion into Britain. A letter despatched by the Saint to the marauders, requesting them to restore the baptized captives, and part of the booty, having been treated by them with contumely, he found himself under the necessity of forthwith issuing the solemn epistle which has come down to us, in which, denouncing Coroticus and his followers as robbers and murderers, he, in his capacity of "Bishop established in Ireland," declares them to be excommunicated.

Having now preached through all the provinces, and filled the greater part of the island with Christians and with churches, St. Patrick saw that the fit period was now arrived for the consolidation of the extensive hierarchy he had thus constructed, by the establishment of a metropolitical see. In selecting the district of Macha for the seat of the primacy, he was influenced, doubtless, by the associations connected with that place, as an ancient royal residence,—the celebrated Palace of Emania having stood formerly in the neighbourhood of the eminence upon which Ardmacha, or Armagh, afterwards rose. The time of the foundation of this see by St. Patrick has been variously stated; but the opinion of those who place it late in his career, besides being equally borne out by evidence, seems by far the most consonant with reason; as it is not probable that he would have set about establishing a metropolitical see for all Ireland, until he had visited the various provinces, ascertained the progress of the Gospel in each, and regulated accordingly their ecclesiastical concerns. It may be remarked, that Ware and other writers, who give to this see the designation of archiepiscopal, and style St. Patrick an archbishop, have been guilty of a slight anachronism; as it was not till the beginning of

* In the chronology of the events of St. Patrick's life, I have throughout followed Dr. Lanigan, than whom, in all respects, there cannot be a more industrious or trustworthy guide.

† "De sanguine innocentium Christainorum, quos ego innumeros Deo genui, atque in Christo confirmavi, postera die qua chrisma neophyti in veste candida flagrabat in fronte ipsorum."—*Confess.*

"We have here, in a few words," says Dr. Lanigan, "an exact description of the ancient discipline, according to which the sacrament of confirmation or chrism used to be administered immediately after baptism by the bishop, in case he were the baptizer or present on the occasion. We see also the garment of the newly baptized."

the eighth century that the title of archbishop was known in Ireland. It was, indeed, in all countries a term of rather late adoption,—St. Athanasius being, I rather think, the first writer in whose works it is found.

The see of Armagh being now established, and the great bulk of the nation won over to the faith, St. Patrick, resting in the midst of the spiritual creation he had called up round him, passed the remainder of his days between Armagh and his favourite retreat, at Sabhul, in the barony of Lecale,—that spot which had witnessed the first dawn of his apostolical career, and now shared in the calm glories which surrounded its setting. Among the many obvious fables with which even the best of the ancient records of his life abound, is to be reckoned the account of his journey to Rome, after the foundation of Armagh, with the view of obtaining, as is alleged, from the pope, a confirmation of its metropolitical privileges, and also of procuring a supply of relics. This story, invented, it is plain, to dignify and lend a lustre to some relics shown in later times at Armagh, is wholly at variance with the Saint's written testimony, which proves him constantly to have remained in Ireland, from the time when he commenced his mission in the barony of Lecale, to the last day of his life. In the document here referred to, which was written after the foundation of Armagh, he declares expressly that the Lord "had commanded him to come among the Irish, and to stay with them for the remainder of his life."

Among the last proceedings recorded of him, he is said to have held some synods at Armagh, in which canons were decreed, and ecclesiastical matters regulated. Of the canons attributed to these early Synods, there are some pronounced to be of a much later date, while of others the authenticity has been, by high and critical authority, admitted.*

The impression that his death was too far distant, appears to have been strong on the Saint's mind when he wrote his Confession, the chief object of which was, to inform his relatives, and others in foreign nations, of the redeeming change which God, through his ministry, had worked in the minds of the Irish. With this view it was that he wrote his parting communication in Latin, though fully aware, as he himself acknowledges, how rude and imperfect was his mode of expressing himself in that tongue, from the constant habit he had been in, for so many years, of speaking no language but Irish.

In his retreat at Sabhul, the venerable Saint was seized with his last illness. Perceiving that death was near at hand, and wishing that Armagh, as the seat of his own peculiar see, should be the resting-place of his remains, he set out to reach that spot; but feeling, on his way, some inward warnings, which the fancy of tradition has converted in the voice of an angel, commanding him to return to Sabhul, as the place appointed for his last hour, he went back to that retreat, and there, about a week after, died, on the 17th of March, A. D. 465, having then reached, according to the most consistent hypothesis on the subject, his seventy-eighth year. No sooner had the news spread throughout Ireland that the great apostle was no more, than the clergy flocked from all quarters to Sabhul, to assist in solemnizing his obsequies; and as every bishop, or priest, according as he arrived, felt naturally anxious to join in honouring the dead by the celebration of the holy mysteries, the rites were continued without interruption through day and night. To psalmody and the chanting of hymns the hours of the night were all devoted; and so great was the pomp, and the profusion of torches kept constantly burning, that, as those who describe the scene express it, darkness was dispelled, and the whole time appeared to be one constant day. A. D. 465.

In the choice of a successor to the see there could be no delay nor difficulty, as the eyes of the Saint himself, and of all who were interested in the appointment, had long been fixed on his disciple Benignus, as the person destined to succeed him. It was remembered that he had, in speaking of this disciple when but a boy, said, in the language rather of prophecy than of appointment, "He will be the heir of my power." Some writers even assert, that the see was resigned by him to Benignus soon after the foundation of Armagh. But there appear little grounds for this assertion, and, according to the most consistent accounts, Benignus did not become bishop of Armagh till after St. Patrick's death.

Besides the natives of Ireland contemporary with our Saint, of whom, in this sketch of his life, some notice has been taken, there were also other distinguished Irishmen, of the same period, whom it would not be right to pass over in silence. Among the names, next to that of the apostle himself, illustrious, are those of Ailbe, "another Patrick," as he was fondly styled, the pious Declan, and Ibar; all disciples of St. Patrick, and all

* Several of these canons appear to have been drawn up at a time when Paganism was not yet extinct in Ireland. Thus, among the canons of the synod of Patrick, Auxilius, and Esserninus, the eighth begins thus.—"Clericus si pro *gentili* in Ecclesiam recipi non licet;" and in the fourteenth, "Christianus qui . . more *Gentilium* ad aruspicem meaverit."

remarkable, as primitive fathers of the Irish church. To Secundinus, the first bishop,* we are told, who died in Ireland (A. D. 448,) is attributed a Latin poem or hymn in honour of St. Patrick, in which the Saint is mentioned as still alive, and of whose authenticity some able critics have seen no reason whatever to doubt.† There is also another hymn, upon the same subject, in the Irish language, said to have been written by Fiech, the disciple of the poet Dubdacht, but which, though very ancient, is evidently the production of a somewhat later period.

While these pious persons were, in ways much more effective than by the composition of such dry, metrical legends, advancing the Christian cause in Ireland, a far loftier flight of sacred song was, at the same time, adventured by an Irish writer abroad, the poet Shiel, or (as his name is Latinized) Sedulius,‡ who flourished in this century,§ and, among other writings of acknowledged merit, was the author of a spirited Iambic poem upon the life of Christ, from which the Catholic church has selected some of her most beautiful hymns.‖

CHAPTER XI.

STATE OF THE SCOTS IN BRITAIN—PROGRESS OF CHRISTIANITY.

It has been seen, from the letter of St. Patrick to Coroticus, that, so late as the middle of the fifth century, the incursions of the Picts and Scots into the territories of the Britons had not yet been discontinued. About the commencement of the same century, A. D. 409. Britain had ceased to form a portion of the Roman empire; the separation according to some opinions, having been voluntary on the part of Britain,¶ while far more obviously it is to be accounted for by the enfeebled state of the Roman power, which rendered the occupation of so remote a province no longer practicable. How little prepared were the Britons themselves for independence, at this period, appears from the helplessness of their struggle against the agressions of their neighbours, and the piteous entreaties for aid so often addressed by them to Rome; while the prompt attention, as far as the resources of the sinking empire would admit, which these appeals generally

* This bishop was sent, in the year 439, together with two others, to aid St. Patrick in his mission; as we find thus recorded in the Annals of Inisfallen:—"Secundinus et Auxiliarius (Auxilius,) et Esserninus mittuntur in auxilium Patricii, nec tamen tenuerunt apostolatum, nisi Patricius solus."

† "I find no reason," says Dr. Lanigan, "for not considering it a genuine work of Secundinus."

The strophes of this hymn, consisting each of four lines, begin with the letters of the alphabet; the first strophe commencing, "Audite omnes amantes Deum; and the last, "Zona Domini præcinctus."

‡ There has been some controversy respecting our claims to this poet, who it is alleged, has been confounded with another writer, of the same name, in the ninth century, universally admitted to have been an Irishman. The reader will find the question sifted, with his usual industry, by Bayle (art Sedulius.) Among the numerous authorities cited by Usher, in favour of our claim to this poet, the title prefixed to a work generally attributed to him (Annotations on Paul's Epistles,) would seem decisive of the question:—"Sedulii Scoti Hyberniensis in omnes Epistolas Pauli Collectaneum." The name, Sedulius, too, written in Irish Siedhuil, and said to be the same as Shiel, is one peculiar, we are told, to Ireland, no instance of its use being found in any other country. By English scholars, it will, I fear, be thought another strong Irish characteristic of this poet, that he sometimes erred in prosody. "Dictio Sedulii," says Borrichius, "facilis, ingeniosa, numerosa, perspicua, sic satis munda—si excipias prosodica quædam delicta."—*Dissertat. de Poet.*

In praising the Paschale Opus of Sedulius, pope Gelasius had described it as written "heroicis versibus;" but, by an unlucky clerical error, the word "hereticis" was in the course of time, substituted for "heroicis," which brought our Irish poet into much disgrace at Rome, and led some canonists, it is said, to the wise decision. "*Omnia* poemata esse heretica."

§ Not content with the honour of contributing, thus early, so great an ornament to foreign literature, some of our writers have represented Sedulius as producing his poems in Ireland; and referred to his classical knowledge as evidence of the state of literature in that country. Thus O'Halloran:—"That poetry was passionately cultivated in our schools, and classical poetry too, I have but to refer to the writings of the famous Sedulius"—Vol. iii. chap. 7. Even Mr. D'Alton has allowed himself to be tempted by his zeal for Ireland into an encouragement of the same delusion. "The treasures of Roman lore," he says, "were profitably spread over the country: the writings of Sedulius testify that classic poetry was cultivated at a very early period in Ireland."

‖ The Paschale Opus of Sedulius is in heroic metre, and extended through five books. His Iambic Hymn, which has been unaccountably omitted by Usher, in his Sylloge, commences thus,—

"A solis ortus cardine,
Ad usque terræ limitem."

¶ Dr. Lingard has followed Gibbon in asserting, on no other authority than a few words of Zosimus, that the Britons at this time voluntarily threw off their allegiance. But the force of evidence, as well as of probability, is all opposed to such a supposition.

received, proves the reluctance with which the connexion was then severed to have been mutual.

In consequence of their urgent solicitations to Honorius, that emperor despatched to the aid of the Britons a single legion, which for a time, suspended the attacks of their invaders; but no sooner was this legion withdrawn for the protection of Gaul, than again the Scots and Picts, breaking through the now unregarded wall of Severus, or else sailing around the ends, carried their ravages into the very heart of Britain. Once more, the interference of the Romans succeeded in turning aside this scourge. Ambassadors, sent from the suffering province to Valentinian, and appearing before him, as is said, with their garments rent, and sand strewed over their heads,* so far excited the emperor's pity, that a last effort was made for them, and a force under the command of Gallio of Ravena, despatched seasonably to their relief. As in all the preceding cases, however, the interposition was but temporary. The Roman general, summoned away, with the whole of his force, to repress rebellion in Africa, announced to the Britons that they must thenceforward look to their own defence; and, from that period, the imperial protection was entirely withdrawn from the island. No sooner had the Romans taken their departure than the work of rapine recommenced; and, as the historian of these Devastations expresses it, "foul droves of Picts and Scots emerged from out their currachs, just as, when the sun is at his burning height, dark battalions of reptiles are seen to crawl from out their earth-holes."† Both in this writer and in Bede we find the most frightful representations of the state of misery to which the Britains were now reduced by the "anniversary" visitations of their spoilers.‡

From the period of Gallio's command, during which was erected, between the Solway and Tyne, the last and most important of all the Roman walls, we hear no more of the sufferings of the Britons till the time when St. Patrick addressed his letter to Coroticus, and when that last great irruption of the Picts and Scots, took place, which drove the Britons at length, in their despair, to invoke the perilous protection of the Saxons. It was in the extremity to which they had then found themselves reduced, that, looking again to the Romans, they addressed to Ætius, the popular captain of the day, that memorable letter inscribed "The Groans of the Britons." But the standard of Attila was then advancing towards Gaul, and all the force of the empire was summoned to oppose his progress. Rome, prodigal so long of her strength to others, now trembled for her own safety; and the ravagers of Britain were, accordingly left to enjoy their prey undisturbed. A.D. 426.

By the arrival of the Saxons, the balance of fortune was soon turned the other way; and the Scots and Picts became, in their turn, the vanquished. To the unhappy Britons, however, this success brought but a change of evils; as their treacherous allies, having first helped them to expel the Scots and Picts, then made use of the latter, as auxiliaries, to crush and subjugate the Britons. In all these transactions it is to be remembered that under the general name of Scots are comprehended not merely the descendants of the Irish colony, long settled in North Britain, but also the native Scots of Ireland themselves, who were equally concerned in most of these expeditions; and who, however contemptuously, as we have seen, Gildas has affected to speak of their currachs, had already fitted out two naval armaments sufficiently notorious to be commemorated by the great poet of Rome's latter days. The share taken by the Irish, in these irruptions into Britain, is noticed frequently both by Gildas and Bede:—"They emerge eagerly," says the former, "from their currachs, in which they have been wafted across the Scytic Valley,"—the name anciently given to the sea between Britain and Ireland. "The impudent Irish plunderers," says Bede, "return to their homes, only to come back again shortly."§

Of the three great "Devastations" of Britain, recorded by the former of these writers, two had occurred in the reign of the monarch Leogaire, who ruled over Ireland at the time of St. Patrick's mission. How far this prince was concerned in originating, or taking a personal share in any of these expeditions, does not appear from the records of his long reign; and, among the domestic transactions in which he was engaged, his war upon the Lagenians, or people of Leinster, to enforce the payment of the odious Boromean

* "Itemque mittuntur querulî Legati, scissis, ut dicitur, vestibus, opertisque sablone capitibus, imperantes a Romanis auxilia, &c.—*Gildas*.

† "Itaque illis ad sua revertentibus, emergunt certatim de Curicis quibus sunt trans Scythicam vallem vecti, quasi in alto Titane, incalescentesque caumate, de arctissimis foraminum cavernulis, fusci vermiculorum cunei, tetri Scotorum Pictorumque greges," &c.—*Gildas*.

For the purpose of representing his countrymen, in ancient times, as Troglodytes, the reverend antiquary, Ledwich, has not hesitated to separate the simile in this passage from the context, and to produce it as evidence that the Irish at that time lived in earth holes.

‡ Quia anniversarias avide prædas, nullo obsistente, trans maria exaggerabant.—*Gildas*, c. 14.

§ Revertuntur ergo impudentes grassatores Hiberni domus, post non longum tempus reversuri.

tribute, seems alone to be worthy of any notice. Defeated by the troops of this province in a sanguinary action, which was called, from the place where it occurred, the Battle of the Ford of the Oaks, Leogaire was himself made prisoner, and regained his freedom only on consenting to swear, by the Sun and the Wind, that he never would again lay claim to the payment of the tribute. This solemn oath, however, the rapacious monarch did not hesitate to infringe,—his courtly Druids having conveniently absolved him from the obligation; and, on his death occurring a short time after, it was said that, to punish his false appeal to their divinities, the Sun and the Wind had destroyed him.* This Pagan oath, and his continued commerce with the Druids, to the very year before he died, shows that Leogaire had either at no time become a Christian, or else had relapsed into Paganism.†

The fervid eagerness and rapidity with which the new faith had been embraced wore so much the appearance of that sort of enthusiasm which mere novelty often excites, that it would have seemed but in the natural course of affairs had there succeeded a lull to all this excitement, and had such a burst of religious zeal, throughout the great mass of the people,—deprived entirely, as it was, of the fuel which persecution always ministers,—subsided speedily into that state of langour, if not of dangerous indifference, in which the uncontested triumph of human desires almost invariably ends. But in this, as in all other respects, the course of the change now worked in the minds of the people of Ireland was peculiar and unprecedented; and, striking as were their zeal and promptitude in adopting the new faith, the steady fervour with which they now devoted themselves to its doctrines and discipline was even still more remarkable. From this period, indeed, the drama of Irish history begins to assume an entirely different character. Instead of the furious strife of kings and chieftains forming, as before, its main action and interest, this stormy spectacle gives way to the pure and peaceful triumphs of religion. Illustrious saints, of both sexes, pass in review before our eyes;—the cowl and the veil eclipse the glory even of the regal crown; and, instead of the grand and festive halls of Tara and Emania, the lonely cell of the fasting penitent becomes the scene of fame.

It is to be recollected, however, that, through all this picture, the hands of ecclesiastics have chiefly guided the pencil; and, though there can be no doubt that the change effected in the minds and hearts of the people, was, to a great extent, as real as it is wonderful, it was yet by no means either so deep or so general as on the face of these monkish annals it appears. While this peaceful pageant of saints and apostles so prominently occupies the foreground, frequent glimpses of scenes of blood are caught dimly in the distance, and the constant appeal to the sword, and the frequent falling of kings suddenly from their thrones, prove the ancient political habits of the people to have experienced but little change. In the page of the annalist, however, all this is kept subordinate or thrown into the shade; and while, for two or three centuries after the introduction of Christianity, the history of the Kings of Ireland presents but a meager list of names, the acts of her missionaries and her saints, and the pious labours of her scholars, afford materials for detail as abundant and minute as they are, in many instances, it must be owned, sterile and uninteresting.

The only event of high political importance, which occurs through the whole of this period, took place at the commencement of the sixth century, not long after the death of St. Patrick; and this was the establishment, under the sons of Erck, of that Scotic or Irish monarchy in North Britain, which not only extended its sway, in the course of a few centuries, over the whole of the modern Scotland, but transmitted, through the race of the Stuarts, a long succession of monarchs to Great Britain. The colony planted in those regions, by Carbre Rieda, in the middle of the third century, though constantly fed with supplies from the parent stock, the Dalriadians of Antrim, had run frequent risks of extirpation from the superior power of their neighbours and rivals, the Picts. In the year 503, however, the Dalriadian Princes of Ireland, aided by the then all-powerful influence of the Hy-Nial family, were enabled to transplant a new colony into North Britain, which, extending the limits of the former settlement, set up for the first time a regal authority, and became, in less than a century,

* Thus recorded in the annals of the Four Masters:—"A. D. 457. anno 29, regni Laogarii filii Nialli Prælium Vadi Quercuum gestum a Lageniensibus contra Laogarium filium Nialli. Captus est Laogarius in prælio isto, et juravit jujurandum Solis et Venti, et Elementorum, Lageniensibus, non venturum se contra eos, durante vita, ob intentum istum.

"A. D. 458, postquam fuisset 30 annis in Regimine Hiberniæ Laogarius filius Nialli Novi-obsidum, occisus est prope Caselam inter Erin et Albaniam (i. e. duos colles qui sunt in regione Faolan,) et Sol et Ventus occiderunt eum quia temeravit eos."

† The Tripartite Life of St. Patrick states that Leogaire was not a sincere believer, and that he was accustomed to say his father Nial had laid an injunction on him never to embrace the Christian faith, but to adhere to the gods of his ancestors.—See Lanigan, chap. 5. note 53.

sufficiently powerful to shake off all dependence upon Ireland.* The territory possessed by these original Scots appears to have included, in addition to the Western Isles, the whole of the mountainous district now called Argyleshire; and from the time of the erection of this Irish sovereignty, North Britain continued, for some centuries, to be divided between two distinct monarchies, the Scotish and the Pictish; till, at length, in the reign of Keneth Mac-Alpine, after a long and fierce struggle, the people of the Picts were entirely vanquished, and the Scots left sole masters of the country.

The memorable migration of the sons of Erck is marked by the Irish annalists as having occurred twenty years after the great battle of Ocha, in which Olill Molt, the successor of Leogaire in the monarchy of Ireland, was slain. This battle itself, too, constituted an era in Irish history, as the race of the Nials, on whose side victory then declared, were, by the fortune of that day's combat, rendered masters of all Ireland. The law established in the reign of Tuathal confining the succession to his own family, and excluding the princes of the other lines from the monarchy, was now wholly set aside; and the Hy-Nials, taking possession of the supreme government, held it uninterruptedly through a course of more than five hundred years.

Of the two kings who succeeded Olill Molt, namely, Lugad and Murcertach, the reign of one extended to twenty-five years, and that of the other to twenty-one; and yet of the former reign all that we find recorded is the names of some battles which signalized its course; while of the grandson of Erck, nothing farther is commemorated than that, in A. D. 534, he fought five battles, and, in the following year, was drowned in a hogshead of wine.† It is, however, but just to add, that he is represented as a good and pious sovereign, and was the first of the Irish monarchs who can, with any degree of certainty, be pronounced Christian.

At the commencement of the sixth century, Christianity had become almost universal throughout Ireland; and before its close her church could boast of a considerable number of holy persons, whose fame for sanctity and learning has not been confined to their own country, but is still cherished and held in reverence by the great majority of the Christian world. Among these ornaments of a period whose general want of intellectual illumination rendered its few shining lights the more conspicuous, stands pre-eminently the Apostle of the Western Isles, Columbkill, who was born in the reign of Murcertach, about the year 521, and who, from the great activity and variety of his spiritual enterprises, was so mixed up with the public transactions of his times, that an account of his life and acts would be found to include within its range all that is most remarkable in the contemporary history of his country.

In citing for historical purposes the Lives of Saints, of whatever age or country, considerable caution ought, of course, to be observed. But there are writers, and those not among the highest, who, in the pride of fancied wisdom, affect a contempt for this species of evidence, which is, to say the least of it, shallow. Both Montesquieu and Gibbon‡ knew far better how to appreciate the true value of such works, as sources of historical information; being well aware that, in times when personages renowned for sanctity held such influence over all ranks and classes, and were even controllers of the thoughts

* The facts of the history of this colony have been thus well summed up by Roy (Military Antiq.):—
"There is incontrovertible authority to join the Irish with the Picts in their martial exploits against the Romans, as well from the Latin, as from the ancient British and Saxon, writers. It is clear, not only from all the Scotch history we have of the times, but from Bede, from the most authentic writers for an age or two before and after him, and from the Roman writers, that Scotland, during the Roman domination in Britain, subsisted under two different monarchies, Irish and Pictish." I have given this passage as I find it cited by Dr. O'Connor, having searched in vain for it in the folio edition of Roy's works, 1793.

† This royal event, as appears by the fragments on the subject remaining, was commemorated by many of the poets of that period.—See the Annals of the Four Masters, ad ann. 534. It is supposed, from the mention in most of the Lives of St. Columbanus, of the circumstance of an Irish ship trading to Nantes, in the sixth century, that wine was imported into Ireland from that city.

‡ "The ancient legendaries," says Gibbon, "deserve some regard, as they are obliged to connect their fables with the real history of their own times" Montesquieu acknowledges still more strongly the use to be derived from such works:—
"Quoiqu'on puisse reprocher aux auteurs de ces Vies d'avoir été quelquefois un peu trop crédules sur des choses que Dieu a certainement faites, si elles ont été dans l'ordre de ses desseins, on ne laisse pas d'en tirer de grandes lumières sur les mœurs et les usages de ces temps-là."—Liv. xxx. chap. 2.
Sir James Mackintosh follows eloquently in the same track:—
"The vast collections of the Lives of Saints often throws light on public events, and opens glimpses into the habits of men in those times; nor are they wanting in sources of interest, though poetical and moral rather than historical..... The whole force of this noble attempt to exalt human nature was at this period spent on the Lives of the Saints,—a sort of moral heroes or demigods, without some acquaintance with whom it is hard to comprehend an age when the commemoration of the virtues then most venerated, as they were embodied in these holy men, was the principal theme of the genius of Christendom."—Vol. 1. chap. 2.
See, on the same subject, the remarks of the Benedictines (Hist. Litèraire de la France,) in speaking of the writers of the seventh century.

and actions of kings, it is often the private lives of these spiritual heroes alone that the true moving springs of the history of their age is to be sought.

Previously to entering, however, on any personal details respecting either Columba or any other of those distinguished Irishmen whose zeal contributed so much at this period, not merely in their own country, but throughout all the British Isles, to the general diffusion of Christianity, it may not be irrelevant to inquire briefly into the peculiar nature of the doctrines which these spiritual successors of our great apostle taught. An attempt has been made, enforced by the learning of the admirable Usher, to prove that the church founded by St. Patrick in Ireland held itself independent of Rome, and, on most of the leading points of Christian doctrine, professed the opinions maintained at present by Protestants. But rarely, even in the warfare of religious controversy, has there been hazarded an assertion so little grounded upon fact. In addition to the original link formed with Rome, from her having appointed the first Irish missionaries, we find in a canon of one of the earliest Synods held in Ireland a clear acknowledgment of the supremacy of the Roman See. Nor was this recognition confined merely to words; as, on the very first serious occasion of controversy which presented itself,—the dispute relative to the time of celebrating Easter,—it was resolved, conformably to the words of this canon, that "the question should be referred to the Head of Cities," and, a deputation being accordingly despatched to Rome for the purpose, the Roman practice, on this point, was ascertained and adopted.

Respecting the nature of the religious doctrines and observances taught by the earliest Christian preachers in Ireland, we have, both in the accounts of their devotional practices and in their writings, the most satisfactory as well as ample information. That they celebrated mass under the ancient traditional names of the Holy Mysteries of the Eucharist, the Sacrifice of Salvation,* the Immolation of the Host, is admitted by Usher himself. But he might have found language even still stronger employed by them to express the mystery their faith acknowledged in that rite.† The ancient practice of offering up prayers for the dead,‡ and the belief of a middle state of existence, after this life, upon which that practice is founded, formed also parts of their creed;§ though of the locality of the purgatorial fire their notions were, like those of the ancient Fathers, vague and undefined. In an old Life of St. Brendan, who lived in the sixth century, it is stated, "the prayer of the living doth much profit the dead;" and, among the canons of a very early Irish Synod, there is one entitled, "Of the Oblation of the Dead." Of the frequent practice, indeed, of prayer and alms-giving for the relief of departed souls, there are to be found throughout the records of those times abundant proofs. In a tract attributed to Cummian, who lived in the seventh century, and of whose talents and learning we shall hereafter have occasion to speak, propitiatory masses for the dead are mentioned. The habit of invoking and praying to saints was, it is evident, general among the ancient Irish Christians; and a Life of St. Brigid, written, according to Ware, in the seventh century, concludes with the following words:—"There are two holy virgins in heaven who may undertake my protection, Mary and St. Brigid, on whose patronage let each of us depend."‖

* The phrase used by St. Chrysostom, in speaking of the progress of the faith in the British Isles, implies in itself that the belief held in those regions respecting the Eucharist was the very same which he himself enforced in his writings, and which the Catholic church maintains to the present day. "They have erected churches (says the saint,) and Altars of Sacrifice."

† Following the belief of the ancient Christian church, as to a Real Presence in the sacrament, they adopted the language also by which this mystery was expressed; and the phrase of "*making the body of Christ*," which occurs so frequently in the Liturgies of the primitive Church, is found likewise in the writings of the first Irish Christians. Thus Adamnan, in his Life of St. Columba, tells of that Saint ordering the bishop, Cronan, "Christi corpus ex more conficere."—Lib. i. c. 44. In later Irish writers, numerous passages to the same purport may be found; but, confining myself to those only of the earlier period, I shall add but the following strong testimony from Sedulius:—

> Corpus, sanguis, aqua, tria vitæ numera nostræ:
> Fonte renascentes, membris et sanguine Christi
> Vescimur, atque ideo templum Deitatis habemur,
> Quod servare Deus nos annuat immaculatum,
> Et faciat tenues tanto Mansore capaces.
>
> *Carmen Paschale*, lib. iv.

‡ Oblationes pro defunctis annua die facimus.—*Tertull.*

§ It is acknowledged by Usher that Requiem masses were among the religious practices of the Irish Christians in those days; but he denies that they were any thing more than "an honourable commemoration of the dead, and a sacrifice of thanksgiving for their salvation." It has been shown clearly, however, that these masses were meant to be also, in the strongest sense of the word, propitiary. In an old Irish missal, found at Bobbio, of which an account has been given in the Rer. Hibern. Script. (Ep. Nunc. cxxxviii.,) there is contained a mass for the dead, entitled "Pro Defunctis," in which the following prayer, and others no less Catholic, are to be found:—"Concede propitius, ut hæc sacra oblatio mortuis prosit ad veniam, et vivis proficiat ad salutem."

‖ See Lanigan, Ecclesiast. Hist. vol. iii. chap. 29, note 107.

The penitential discipline established in their monasteries was of the most severe description. The weekly fast-days observed by the whole Irish church were, according to the practice of the primitive times, Wednesdays and Fridays: and the abstinence of the monks, and of the more pious among the laity, was carried to an extreme unknown in later days. The benefit of pilgrimages was also inculcated; and we find mention occasionally, in the Annals, of princes dying in pilgrimage.* The practice of auricular confession, and their belief in the power of the priest to absolve from sin, is proved by the old penitential canons, and by innumerable passages in the Lives of their Saints.†

The only point, indeed, either of doctrine or discipline,—and under this latter head alone the exception falls,—in which the least difference, of any moment, can be detected between the religion professed by the first Irish Christians and that of the Catholics of the present day, is with respect to the marriage of the clergy, which, as appears from the same sources of evidence that have furnished all the foregoing proofs, was, though certainly not approved of, yet permitted and practised. Besides a number of incidental proofs of this fact, the sixth Canon of the Synod attributed to St. Patrick enjoins that "the clerk's wife shall not walk out without having her head veiled."‡

The evidence which Usher has adduced to prove, that communion in both kinds was permitted to the laity among the Irish, is by no means conclusive or satisfactory;§—though it would certainly appear, from one of the Canons of the Penitential of St. Columbanus,‖ that, before the introduction of his rule, novices had been admitted to the cup. It is to be remembered, however, that any difference of practice, in this respect, has been always considered as a mere point of discipline, and accordingly subject to such alteration as the change of time and circumstances may require.

CHAPTER XII.

EMINENT RELIGIOUS PERSONS, COLUMBA, COLUMBANUS, BRIGID.

Among the signs of the religious enthusiasm of that period, not the least striking is the number of persons of both sexes, who, in the midst of so many competitors for the palm of holiness, became sufficiently eminent to attain the title of Saints. These holy persons, are by our ecclesiastical writers, distinguished into two classes, the first of which, consisting partly of foreigners, and partly of natives, extended down from the coming of St. Patrick to the latter years of Tuathal's reign, about A. D. 542. To this class, which was accounted the holiest, as including in it the friends and disciples of St. Patrick, succeeded another series, reaching to the very close of the sixth century; and to this second class of Saints, Columba, or, as he is more commonly called, Columbkill, belonged. In a country where the pride of blood has been at all times so predominant, it formed no inconsiderable part of this Saint's personal advantages, that he was of royal extraction; being, by the paternal side, descended from that "father of many kings," Nial, while his mother, Æthena, was of an

* See Tigernach, A. D. 610, and also 723. In the Annals of the Four Masters, A. D. 777, the pilgrimage of a son of the king of Connaught to the Isle of Hyona is recorded.

† On this point Usher acknowledges that "they did (no doubt) both publicly and privately make confession of their faults, (chap. 5,) and adds, in proof of this fact, what follows:—"One old penitential canon we find laid down in a synod held in this country, about the year of our Lord 450, by St. Patrick, Auxilius and Isserninus, which is as followeth:—'A Christian who hath killed a man, or committed fornication, or gone unto a soothsayer, after the manner of the Gentiles, for every of those crimes shall do a year of penance; when his year of penance is accomplished, he shall come with witnesses, and afterward he shall be absolved by the priest.'" Usher contends, however, for their having in so far differed from the belief of the present Catholics, that they did not attribute to the priest any more than a ministerial power in the remission of sins.

‡ If the term clerk here be understood to comprise all the members of the clerical orders, the permission to marry extended also, of course, to priests; but it is thought by some that the words of the canon apply only to the inferior ranks of the clergy. "With respect to our English church (says Dr. Milner,) at the end of the sixth century, we gather from St. Gregory's permission for the clerks in minor orders to take wives, that this was unlawful for the clergy in holy orders, namely, for bishops, priests, and deacons, agreeably to a well-known rule of reasoning, 'Exceptio confirmat regulam;' and we are justified in inferring the same with respect to the Irish clergy in St. Patrick's time."—*Inquiry into certain vulgar opinions, &c. &c.* Letter 14.

§ He founds his conclusion chiefly on their use of such phrases as "the communion of the Lord's body and blood:" whereas the Catholics of the present day, among whom the laity receive the sacrament under one kind only, use the very same language.

‖ Columban. in Pœnitent., as I find it thus cited by Ceillier:—"Novi quia indocti et quicunque tales fuerint, ad calicem non accedant."

illustrious and princely house of Leinster. We are told of a dream which his mother had, before she was delivered of him, which prefigures so fancifully the future spread of his spiritual influence and fame, that, though but a dream, it, may perhaps, briefly be mentioned. An Angel, it is said, appeared to her, bringing a veil in his hand, of wonderful beauty, seemingly painted over with a variety of flowers, which, having presented it to her, he almost instantly again took away, and spreading it out, allowed it to fly through the air. On her asking sadly why he had deprived her of this treasure, the Angel answered that it was far too precious to be left with her; and she then observed it, far and wide, expanding itself over the distant mountains, forests, and plains.*

This Saint was born about the year 521, in the barony of Kilmacrenan; and his name, originally Crimthan, was, by reason, it is said, of the dove-like simplicity of his character, changed afterwards into Columba. To this was added, in the course of time, the surname of Cille or Kille, making the title by which he was from thenceforth distinguished Columbkill, or Columba of the Churches. Of the different schools where he pursued his studies, the most celebrated was that of Finnian at Clonard. There had already, in the time of St. Patrick, or immediately after, sprung up a number of ecclesiastical seminaries throughout Ireland; and, besides those of Ailbe, of Ibar, of the poet Fiech, at Sletty, there appears to have been also a school at Armagh, established by the apostle himself, and entrusted, during his lifetime, to the care of his disciple Benignus. At the period we have now reached, such institutions had multiplied in every direction; but by far the most distinguished of them all, as well for the number as the superior character of its scholars, was the long-renowned seminary of St. Finnian, at Clonard.† Having completed his course of studies under this master, Columba early commenced those labours by which his fame was acquired; being but in his twenty-fifth year when he founded that monastery called Doire Calgach, near Lough Foyle, from whence the name of the town, or city, of Derry was derived. Not long after, proceeding to the southern parts of the ancient Meath, he erected another monastery, equally famous, on a site then called Dairmagh, or the Plain of the Oaks; and which had been given, as an offering "to God and St. Columba," by a pious chieftain named Brendan.‡

But the Saint perceived that it was not in Ireland he could hope to reap the full harvest of his toils. Thwarted, as he was, in his spiritual labours, by the eternal feuds of the Irish princes, among whom his own relatives, the Nials of the North and South, were, at all times, the most unmanageable, he resolved to seek elsewhere some more promising field of exertion; and the condition of the northern Picts in Britain, who were still sunk in all the darkness of Paganism, seemed to present the scene of action his holy ambition desired.§ He had in view also, it is plain, the better instruction and guidance of that great body of his countrymen who had now settled in North Britain; nor was his relationship to the princely house which had founded that new kingdom without some share, it may be presumed, in stimulating his anxiety for its welfare. There is, in some of the various accounts of his life, a story attributing his departure from Ireland to some fierce and revengeful conduct, on his part, towards the monarch Diarmid; of which he afterwards, it is added, so bitterly repented, as to impose upon himself perpetual exile in penance of the wrong. It has been shown satisfactorily, however, that there are no grounds for this story; and that though, for some venial and unimportant proceedings, an attempt had been made to excommunicate him before his departure from Ireland, the account of his quarrel with this monarch is but an ill-constructed fable, which, from the internal evidence of its inconsistencies, falls to pieces of itself.‖

Having obtained from his relative, Conal, who was then King of the Albanian Scots,

* Adamnan's Life of St. Columba, lib. iii. cap. i. Of this remarkable piece of biography, written by an Irishman in the seventh century, the reader may not dislike to see some specimens. The following is the passage describing this dream:—"Angelus Domini in somnis genetrici venerabilis viri, quâdam nocte inter conceptum et partum apparuit, eique quasi quoddam miræ pulchritudinis peplum assistens detulit: in quo veluti universorum decorosè florum depicti videbantur; quodque post aliquod breve intervallum, ejus de manibus reposcens, abstulit; elevansque et expandens, in aëre dimisit vacuo. Illa vero de illo tristificata sublato, sic ad illum venerandi habitus virum: Cur a me, ait, hoc lætificum tum cito abstrahis pallium? Ille consequenter; Idcirco, inquit, quia hoc sagum alicujus est tam magnifici honoris, quod apud te diutius retinere non poteris. His dictis, supra memoratum peplum mulier paulatim a se elongari volando videbat, camporumque latitudinem in majes crescendo excedere, montesque et saltus majore sui mensura superare."

† In this school of Finnian at Clonard, there are said to have been, at one time, three thousand scholars. "Finianus Abbas de Cluain-eraird, magister sanctorum Hiberniæ, habuit enim in sua schola de Cluain-eraird tria millia sanctorum."—*Martyr. Dungal, ad 12 Decemb.*

‡ See Camden, 1011, where he is guilty of the double error of confounding Dearmagh with Armagh, and St. Columbanus with St. Columba.

§ Venit de Hybernia Britanniam prædicaturus verbium Dei provinciis Septentrionalium Pictorum—*Bede*, lib. iii. c. 4.

‖ This long story may be found, in its most abridged shape, in Usher, De Britann. Eccles. Primord. 902.

a grant of the small island of Hy, or Iona, which was an appendage to the new Scotish kingdom, Columba, in the year 563, together with twelve of his disciples, set sail for that sequestered spot. In the same year, a sanguinary battle was fought in Ireland, between the Nials of the North and the Irish Picts, in which the latter were, with immense slaughter, defeated; and it is evident, from a passage in Adamnan's Life of Columba, which represents the Saint as conversing with Conal at the time of that battle, that he must have visited the court of the Scotish king soon after his arrival at Hy. One of his first tasks, on entering upon the management of his island, was to expel from thence some Druids who had there established their abode; this secluded island having been early one of the haunts of this priesthood, as the remains of circular temples, and other such monuments, still existing among its ruins, seem to prove. Having erected there a monastery and a church, and arranged such matters as were connected with his establishment, he now directed his attention to the main object of his great Christian enterprise—that of exploring the wild regions beyond the Grampian hills, where no missionary before himself had ever yet ventured, and endeavouring to subdue to the mild yoke of the Gospel the hardy race who were there entrenched. The territory of the northern Picts, at this period, included all that part of modern Scotland which lies to the north of the great range of the Grampian mountains;* and the residence of their king, Brude, at the time of Columba's mission, was somewhere on the borders of Loch Ness.† Hither the courageous Saint first directed his steps; and the fame of his coming having, no doubt, preceded him, on arriving with his companions at the royal castle, he found the gates closed against him. His exclusion, however, was but of short duration. By one of those miracles to which, in the records of that all-believing age, every event in favour of the church is attributed, Columba, advancing, made the sign of the cross upon the gates, and instantly, at the touch of his hand they flew open.‡ Apprized of this prodigy, the king came forward, with his whole council, to give him welcome; and from thenceforth treated his holy visiter with every mark of reverence. Notwithstanding the efforts made by the Magi—more especially by the king's tutor, Broichan—to prevent the preaching of the missionaries, and uphold the Pagan creed, their opposition proved entirely fruitless; and the conversion of the king himself, which had been early effected,§ was gradually followed, in the course of this and other visits of the Saint, by the propagation of the Christian faith throughout the whole of North Pictland.‖

A. D. 563.

His apostolical labours were next extended to the Western Isles, throughout the whole of which the enlightening effects of his presence and influence were felt. Wherever he directed his steps, churches were erected, religious teachers supplied, and holy communities formed. Among the islands which he most favoured with his visits are mentioned Hymba and Ethica;¶ in the latter of which a monastery had been founded by a priest named Findchan, who incurred the displeasure of the Saint by an act strongly characteristic of those times. Aidus the Black, a prince of the royal blood of the Irish Cruthens or Picts, having murdered, besides other victims, Diermit, the monarch of Ireland, took refuge in the monastery of Ethica, and was there, notwithstanding these crimes, raised to the priesthood.**

* Hoc est, eis qui arduis atque horrentibus montium jugis ab Australibus eorum sunt regionibus sequestrati.—*Bede*, lib. 3. cap. 4.

† Ubi verò munitio ejus, vel urbs regia fuerit, nullibi satis certo reperio.—*Adamnan*. He mentions, however, that it was near Loch Ness.—"Nesæ fluminis lacum."

‡ Alio in tempore, hoc est in prima Sancti fatigatione itineris ad Regem Brudium, casu contigit, ut idem Rex fastu relatus regio, suæ munitionis, superbe agens, in primo beati adventu viri, non aperiret portas. Quod ut cognovit homo Dei, cum comitibus, ad valvas portarum accedens, primum Dominicæ Crucis imprimens signum, tum deinde manum pulsans contra ostia ponit: quæ continuo sponte, retro retrusis fortiter seris, cum omni celeritate aperta sunt; quibus statim apertis, Sanctus consequenter cum sociis intrat.—*Adamnan*, lib. ii. cap. 3.

§ Thus, it is said, in some verses quoted by Usher from an Irish Breviary,—

"Relinquens patriam caram Hiberniam,
Per Christi gratiam venit ad Scotiam;
Per quem idonea vitæ primordia
Rex gentis sumpsit Pictiniæ."

‖ In an article of the Ed. Review, No. 15, art. 7, it is erroneously said, "St. Columba, who was an Irish Celt, and the Apostle of the Highlands, is not stated to have used an interpreter, when he addressed the Pictish kings, or when he preached the gospel to vast multitudes of their people." It appears, on the contrary from Adammanus, that the saint did use an interpreter on some of these occasions,—"per interpretatorem, sancto predicante viro:" and the conclusion that the Picts were not a Celtic people seems not a little confirmed by this circumstance.

¶ It is not known by what names these two islands are called at present. Pinkerton supposes that Ethica may have been the island now named Lewis; but Dr. Lanigan thinks it was no other than Eig, or Egg, an island about thirty-six miles to the north of Ily.

** Alio in tempore supra memoratus Presbyter Finchanus, Christi miles, Aidum cognomento Nigrum, regio genere ortum, Cruthinium gente, de Scotia ad Britanniam sub Clericatus habitu secum adduxit, ut in suo

He superintended also the spiritual affairs of the Scotish kingdom; founding there, as elsewhere, religious establishments. From the mention, too, by his biographer Adamnan, of some Saxon converts at Hy, it seems not improbable that his fame had attracted thither some of those Anglo-Saxons who had now got footing in North Britain; and that even thus early had commenced the course of Christian kindliness towards that people, for which the Irish are so warmly commended by Bede;—forming a contrast, as it did, to the uncharitable conduct which the same writer complains of in the Britons, who were, he says, guilty of the sin of neglecting to announce the Gospel to the Anglo-Saxons.* As, at this time, Augustine and his brother missionaries had not yet arrived in Britain, there can hardly be a doubt that by St. Columba and his companions the work of converting the Anglo-Saxons was begun; and the Christians of that nation, mentioned by Adamnan as among the converts at Hy, were, it is most probable, some of the first-fruits of the Saint's apostolical labours. While engaged in his beneficent ministry among the inhabitants of the isles, Columba, more than once, found himself called upon to defend this peaceful people against the inroads of a band of plunderers from the Albanian shores, who, though themselves professing to be Christians, and, some of them, relatives of the Saint, took every opportunity of making incursions upon the Christians of the Isles.† With the same spirit which St. Patrick evinced in denouncing the pirate Prince Coroticus, Columba pronounced the solemn sentence of excommunication against the chief of these marauders.

On the death of Conal, King of the British Scots, in the year 572–3, Aidan, the son of Gauran, succeeded to the throne; and it is mentioned as a proof of the general veneration in which Columba was then held, as well by sovereigns as by the clergy and the people, that he was the person selected to perform the ceremony of inauguration on the accession of the new king.‡ Though occupied so zealously with the spiritual interests of North Britain, he did not neglect to inform himself constantly of the state of the religious houses founded by him in Ireland, and even, occasionally, we are told, repaired thither in person, when affairs of moment required his presence. An exigence of this nature, highly important in a political point of view, occurred soon after the accession of Aidan to the throne of the British Scots. A claim put forth by this sovereign, as descendant of the ancient princes of Dalriada, having been contested by the Irish monarch Aidus, it was agreed that the difference between them should be submitted to the states-general of Ireland, convoked at Drumceat; and the attendance of King Aidan at this assembly being indispensable, he was accompanied thither by his friend St. Columba. Setting out in a small vessel, attended by a few monks, the Saint and the king directed their course to the north; and, after encountering a violent storm in the open sea, landed at the mouth of the river which runs into Lough Foyle, and from thence proceeded to Drumceat. They found this national assembly, which consisted not only of the kings and nobles, but likewise of the heads of clerical bodies, engaged in a discussion, the subject of which, shows the singular tenacity with which old customs and institutions still held their ground among this people, even in the midst of the new light by which they were now surrounded. We have seen how powerful, in the times of Paganism, was the influence of the Bardic or Literary Order; insomuch that strong measures had been found necessary, by some of the early kings, to repress, or at least, regulate, the pretensions of that body. At the time of which we are speaking, the two classes composing this Order, namely, the Fileas, or poets, and the Seanachies, or antiquaries, had become so burdensome from their numbers, and so unpopular from their insolence, that some vigorous steps were meditated against them by this assembly; and their suppression, and even banishment from the country, were on the point of being decided, when St.

A. D. 572–3.

apud se monasterio per aliquod peregrinaretur annos: qui scilicet Aidus niger valde sanguinarius homo et multorum fuerat trucidator; qui et Dermitium filium Cerbuill, totius Scotiæ regnatorem Deo auctore ordinatum interfecerat.—*Adamnan*, cap. 4.

* "To the end that by reason the same nation (the Scots, or Irish) had taken care willingly and without envy to communicate to the English people the knowledge they have of the true Deity . . . even as, on the contrary, the Britons would not acquaint the English with the knowledge they had of the Christian faith."—*Ecclesiast. Hist.* lib. v. cap. 23.

† Adamnan, lib ii. cap. 22. "Ecclesiarum persecutores," the biographer calls them.

‡ Columba had been, at first, unwilling to perform this ceremony; but an angel, as his biographers say, appeared to him during the night, holding a book called "The Glass Book of the Ordination of Kings," which he put into the hands of the Saint, and ordered him to ordain Aidan king, according to the directions of that book. This Liber Vitreus is supposed to have been so called from having its cover encrusted with glass or crystal. It is rather remarkable, that a learned writer on church antiquities, Martene, refers to this inauguration of Aidan by St. Columba, as the most ancient instance he had met with, in the course of his reading, of the benediction of kings in Christian times. "Quorum (regum) benedictio haud minoris antiquitatis est quam imperatorum. Antiquissima omnium quas inter legendum mihi reperire licuit, ea est quæ á Columba Abbate Hiensi facta est, jussu Angeli, in Aidanum Scotorum regem."—*De Antiq. Eccles. Rit.* lib. ii. cap. 10.

Columba arrived. Whether actuated by his general feeling of benevolence, or having some leaning in favour of the professors of an art which he himself practised,* the Saint interfered in behalf of the threatened Bards; and prevailed so far as that, under certain limitations and restrictions, their order should still be permitted to exist.†

The important question, respecting the poets, being thus disposed of, the Assembly had next to pronounce their judgment upon the question at issue between the two kings. On the ground of his descent from Carbre Rieda, to whom, as we have seen, a grant had been made, in the middle of the third century, of all those parts of the county of Antrim which formed the territory called, from thenceforth, Dalriada, King Aidan asserted his hereditary right to the sovereignty of that territory, and maintained that, as belonging to his family, it should be exempt, if not in the whole, at least in part, from the payment of tribute to the King of Ireland, and from all such burdens as affected the rest of the kingdom. The Irish monarch, on the other hand, contended that the territory in question formed a portion of his dominions, and had always, equally with the rest, been subject to imposts and contributions; that, before the Dalriadians became sovereigns in Britain, such tribute had been always paid by that principality, nor could the elevation of its princes to a throne in North Britain make any difference in its relations to the Irish monarchy. Notwithstanding his known attachment to King Aidan, so great was the general trust in Columba's sense of justice, that to him alone the decision of the question was first referred. On his declining, however, to pronounce any opinion respecting it, the task of arbitration was committed to St. Colman,—a man deeply versed, as we are told, in the legal and ecclesiastical learning,—who, on the obvious grounds, that Dalriada, being an Irish province, could not but be subject, in every respect, to the monarch of all Ireland, gave his decision against the claim of King Aidan.

During this, his last, sojourn in Ireland, Columba visited all the various religious establishments which he had founded; passing some time at his favourite monastery at Diarmagh, and there devoting himself to the arrangement of matters connected with the discipline of the church. After accomplishing, to the best of his power, all the objects he had in view in visiting Ireland, he returned to his home in North Britain,—to that "Isle of his heart," as, in some prophetic verses attributed to him, Iona is called,‡—and there, assiduous to the last in attending to the care of his monasteries and numerous churches, remained till death closed his active and beneficent course. The description given of his last moments by one who received the details from an eye-witness, presents a picture at once so calm and so vivid, that I shall venture, as nearly as possible in the words of his biographer, to relate some particulars of the scene.§ Having been forewarned, it is said, in his dreams of the time when his death was to take place, he rose, on the morning of the day before, and ascending a small eminence, lifted up his hands and

* According to Mr. O'Reilly, Columba "wrote several pieces, both in Irish and Latin. Upwards of thirty poems in the Irish language, ascribed to him, have come down to our times, of which copies are in possession of the assistant secretary." There is, however, little or no reliance to be placed on the authenticity of the pieces attributed to this Saint; which had probably their origin in that favourite practice of the Irish writers of the middle ages, of introducing their own productions to public notice under the sanction of long celebrated names.

† The whole of this account of the proceedings at Drumceat, respecting the Bards, is represented by Mr. Whitty (Popular Hist. of Ireland) as an invention of the poets of subsequent times, who, he says, "knew well the value of dignified associations, and accordingly did not fail to connect their order with the names of St. Patrick and St. Columb-cille." But the perfect consistency of the acts of the council at Drumceat, as well as of some others at a still earlier period, with all that is known of the political importance of the Irish bards in later times, is such as to confirm the historical truth of the curious circumstance above related. In a parliament held by the Duke of Clarence, at Kilkenny, in the reign of Edward III., it was made penal to entertain any of the Irish minstrels, rhymers, or news-tellers. (*Davies's Discovery.*) Under Henry VIII., some of the coercive measures proposed by Baron Finglas were directed against "Irish minstrals, rhymers, shannaghs (genealogists,) and bards;" and, in the time of Elizabeth, acts were passed against this order of men, which show how dangerous, as political engines, they were even at that period considered. "For that those rhymers do by their ditties and rhymes made to divers lords and gentlemen in Ireland, in the commendation and high praise of extortion, rebellion, rape, raven, and other injustice, encourage those lords and gentlemen rather to follow those vices than to leave," &c. &c. So late, indeed, as the reign of Charles I. we find "wandering poets," who sought to gain their ends, "under threat of some scandalous rhyme," made liable to imprisonment.

‡ "In the Isle of my heart, the Isle of my love, instead of a monk's voice there shall be lowing of cattle. But, ere the world comes to an end, Iona shall flourish as before."—Cited in *Armstrong's Gaelic Dictionary.* Dr. Johnson appears to have been animated with a similar spirit of prophecy respecting this island. "Perhaps," says the moralist, "in the revolutions of the world, Iona may be, some time again, the instructress of the western regions." (*Journey to the Western Islands.*)

§ Post hæc verba de illo dicens (descendens) monticellulo, et ad monasterium revertens, sedebat in tugurio Psalterium scribens; et ad illum tertii Psalmi versiculum perveniens, ubi scribitur, Inquirentes autem Dominum non deficient omni bono. Hic, ait, in fine cessandum est paginæ; quæ vero sequuntur Baitheneus scribat. . . . Interim cœtus monachorum cum luminaribus occurrens, Patre viso moriente, cœpit plangere; et ut ab aliquibus qui præsentes inerant didicimus, Sanctus necdum egrediente anima, apertis sursum oculis, ad utrumque latus cum mira hilaritate et lætitia circumspiciebat. . . . Diermitius tum Sancti sanctum sublevat, ad benediciendum monachorum chorum, dexteram manum: sed et ipse venerabilis Pater in quantum poterat, suam simul movebat manum.—*Adamnan*, lib. iii. cap. 3.

solemnly blessed the monastery. Returning from thence, he sat down in a hut adjoining, and there occupied himself in copying part of the Psalter, till, having finished a page with a passage of the thirty-third Psalm, he stopped and said, "Let Baithen write the remainder." This Baithen, who was one of the twelve disciples that originally accompanied him to Hy, had been named by him as his successor. After attending the evening service in the church, the Saint returned to his cell, and, reclining on his bed of stone, delivered some instructions to his favourite attendant, to be communicated to the brethren. When the bell rang for midnight prayer, he hastened to the church, and was the first to enter it. Throwing himself upon his knees, he began to pray—but his strength failed him; and his brethren, arriving soon after, found their beloved master reclining before the altar, and on the point of death. Assembling all around him, these holy men stood silent and weeping, while the Saint, opening his eyes, with an expression full of cheerfulness, made a slight movement of his hand, as if to give them his parting benediction, and in that effort breathed his last, being then in the seventy-sixth year of his age.

The name of this eminent man, though not so well known throughout the Latin church as that of another Irish Saint, Columbanus, with whom he is frequently confounded,* holds a distinguished place among the Roman and other martyrologies, and in the British Isles will long be remembered with traditional veneration. In Ireland, rich as have been her annals in names of saintly renown, for none has she continued to cherish so fond a reverence, through all ages, as for her great Columbkill; while that Isle of the Waves,† with which his name is now inseparably connected, and which, through his ministry, became "the luminary of the Caledonian regions,"‡ has far less reason to boast of her numerous Tombs of Kings, than of those heaps of votive pebbles left by pilgrims on her shore, marking the path that once led to the honoured Shrine of her Saint.§ So great was the reverence paid to his remains in North Britain, that, at the time when the island of Hy began to be infested by the Danes, Kenneth III. had his bones removed to Dunkeld on the river Tay, and there founded a church, dedicated it to his memory; while the Saint's crosier, and a few other relics, were all that fell to the share of the land of his birth.‖

In the annals of the Four Masters, for the year 1006, we find mention made of a splendid copy of the Four Gospels, said to have been written by St. Columba's own hand, and preserved at Kells in a cover, richly ornamented with gold.¶ In the time of Usher, this precious manuscript was still numbered among the treasures of Kells;** and if not written by Columba himself, is little doubted to have been the work of one of his disciples.

The reigns of those monarchs who filled, in succession, the Irish throne, during the interval which the acts of this eminent man occupied, possess little interest except what is imparted to them by their connexion with the great Saints of those times. Uninterest-

* Among the writers who have been led into this confusion is M. Thierry, (Hist. de la Conquête de l'Angleterre,) who, in pursuance of his professed object,—that of making his history picturesque,—has jumbled together the lives of the two saints most graphically.

† Such, according to some writers, is the meaning of the term Iona.—See *Garnett's Tour in the Highlands*, vol. i.

‡ "We were now treading that illustrious island, which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions. That man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer upon the ruins of Iona."—*Dr. Johnson's Journey to the Western Islands.*

§ "The Port na Curachan, where Columba is said to have first landed;—a bay towards the west, which is marked by large conical heaps of pebbles, the penitentiary labours, as tradition says, of pilgrims to his shrine."—*Macculloch's Western Isles.*

‖ Among the various prophecies attributed to St. Columba, the arrival of the English and their conquest of the country were, it is said, foretold by him. "Then," says Giraldus, "was fulfilled the alleged prophecy of Columba, of Hibernia, who long since foretold that, in this war, there should be so great a slaughter of the inhabitants, that their enemies would swim up to the knees in their blood."—(*Hibern. Expugnat.* lib. ii cap. 16.) There is yet another remarkable passage of this prophecy, which adjourned its fulfilment to a very remote period.—"The Irish are said to have four prophets, Moling, Braccan, Patrick, and Columbkill, whose books, written in the Irish language, are still extant; and speaking of this conquest (by the English,) they all bear witness that in after times the island of Ireland will be polluted with many conflicts, long strife, and much slaughter. But they all pronounce that the English shall not have a complete victory till but a very little before the day of Judgment." "Omnes testantur eam crebris conflictibus, longoque certamine multa in posterum tempora multis cædibus fœdaturam. Sed vix parum ante diem judicii plenam Anglorum populo victoriam compomittunt."—(*Ib.* cap. 33.)

¶ Usher mentions also another copy of the Gospels, said to have been written by Columba's own hand, which had been preserved at the monastery founded by that Saint at Durrow. "Inter cujus κειμηλια Evangeliorum codex vetustissimus asservabatur, quem ipsius Columbæ fuisse monachi dictitabant: ex quo, et non minoris antiquitatis altero, eidem Columbæ assignato (quem in urbe Kells sive Kenlis dictâ Midenses sacrum habent) diligentè cum editione vulgatâ Latinâ collatione factâ, in nostros usus variantium lectionum binos libellos concinnavimus."—*Eccles. Primord.* 691.

** This Kells manuscript is supposed to have been the same now preserved in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, on the margin of which are the following words, written by O'Flaherty, in the year 1677:—"Liber autem hic scriptus est manu ipsius B. Columbæ."

ing, however, as are the events of these reigns, the historian is bound not to pass them wholly in silence, but at least to number the royal links as they pass, however void they may be of lustre or value. To Murkertach, the last occupant of the throne whom we have noticed, succeeded Tuathal Maogarb, great-grandson of Nial the Great, during whose reign of eleven years the only events that stand out prominently in his annals, are the death of the aged bishop Moctheus, the last surviving disciple of St. Patrick, and the foundation of Columba's favourite establishment, the monastery of Daire-Calgaich, or Derry. His successor Diarmid's life and reign are somewhat more fertile in events. With the fate common to most Roydamnas, or successors apparent, he had been, throughout the reign of Tuathal, an object of jealousy and suspicion; and was even, for some time, through fear of persecution, obliged to conceal himself among the islets of Lough Rie. It was here, doubtless, that his friendship with St. Kieran, the eminent founder of Clonmacnois, commenced; and either then, or on his accession to the monarchy, he made a grant of one of the islands to this Saint, who, building a monastery upon the spot, was soon joined by a numerous company of monks, and called up around him, in those solitudes, the voice of psalmody and prayer. By the same royal patronage, he was enabled, not many years after, to accomplish a still greater design; for, a site being granted to him, by the monarch, on the western bank of the Shannon,* St. Kieran founded there that great monastery of Clonmacnois, which became in after-times so celebrated for its nine Royal Churches, and all those luxuries of ecclesiastical architecture which gathered around its site.†

A. D. 527.

A. D. 539.

In the reign of this monarch, the Ancient Hall or Court of Tara, in which, for so many centuries, the Triennial Councils of the nation had been held, saw, for the last time, her kings and nobles assembled within its precincts; and the cause of the desertion of this long-honoured seat of legislation shows to what an enormous height the power of the ecclesiastical order had then risen. Some fugitive criminal, who had fled for sanctuary to the monastery of St. Ruan, having been dragged forcibly from thence to Tara, and there put to death, the holy abbot and his monks cried aloud against the sacrilegious violation; and proceeding in solemn procession to the Palace, pronounced a curse upon its walls. "From that day," say the annalists, "no king ever sat again at Tara;" and a poet who wrote about that period, while mourning evidently over the fall of this seat of grandeur, ventures but to say, "It is not with my will that Teamor is deserted."‡ A striking memorial of the church's triumph on the occasion, was preserved in the name of distinction given to the monastery,§ which was, ever after, in memory of this malediction, called "The Monastery of the Curses of Ireland."

A. D. 554.

On the death of Diarmid, who, after a reign of twenty-one years, was killed by Aidus, a Dalriadian prince, surnamed the Black, the crown reverted to the Eugenian branch of the northern Nials; and two brothers, Donald and Furgus, who had fought with success against the Nials of the South, in the great battle of Culdremni, were elevated to the sovereignty. The joint reign of these royal brothers lasted but for a year,‖ during which an invasion of the province of Leinster for the enforcement of the odious tribute, and a furious battle in consequence, on the banks of the Liffey, in which the Lagenians were defeated, marked with the accustomed track of blood the short term of their copartnership. To these succeeded another pair of associates in the throne, named Boetan and Eochad; and after them, at an interval of but two years, Anmerius, or Anmery, a prince, remarkable, it is said, for learning, who, after reigning little more than the same period, was cut off by a violent death; as was also his successor, Boetan the Second, in the course of less than a year. The prince raised to the sovereignty after this last-named monarch was that Adius, of whom we have already spoken,—memorable for the great convention which he held at Drumceat,—and whose reign, far more fortunate than the passing pageants which had gone before him, lasted for the long space of six-and-twenty years.

A. D. 599.

To give an account of all the numerous Saints, male and female, whom the fervent zeal of this period quickened into existence and celebrity, would be a task so extensive as to require a distinct historian to itself; and, luckily, this important part of Ireland's history, during her first Christian ages, has been treated fully, and with the most sifting

* Among the lands bestowed for this purpose, were some contiguous to Mount Usneach, which had been formerly occupied by the Druids.

† See, for an account of these churches, Ware, vol. i.

‡ Irish Hymn, attributed to Fiech, a disciple of St. Patrick, but evidently from this allusion to the desertion of Tara, written at least as late as the time of King Diarmid.

§ Annal. Ulton. ad ann. 564, note.

‖ O'Flaherty. The Annals of the Four Masters prolong it to three years.

zeal and industry, by a writer in every respect qualified for such a task, and who has left no part of his ample subject untouched or unexplored.* Referring, therefore, to this learned historian for a detailed account of the early Irish Church, I shall notice such only of its most distinguished ornaments as became properly known throughout Europe, and regained for the "Sacred Island" of other days, all its ancient fame, under the new Christian designation of "the Island of Saints."

The institution of female monasteries, or nunneries, such as, in the fourth century, were established abroad by Melania, and other pious women, was introduced into Ireland, towards the close of the fifth century, by St. Brigid; and so general was the enthusiasm her example excited, that the religious order which she instituted spread its branches through every part of the country. Taking the veil herself at a very early age, when, as we are told, she was clothed in the white garment, and the white veil placed upon her head, she was immediately followed, in this step, by seven or eight other young maidens, who, attaching themselves to her fortunes, formed, at the first, her small religious community.† The pure sanctity of this virgin's life, and the supernatural gifts attributed to her, spread the fame she had acquired more widely every day, and crowds of young women and widows applied for admission into her institution. At first she contented herself with founding establishments for her followers in the respective districts of which they were natives; and in this task the bishops of the different dioceses appear to have concurred with, and assisted her. But the increasing number of those who required her own immediate superintendence rendered it necessary to form some one great establishment, over which she should herself preside; and the people of Leinster, who claimed to be peculiarly entitled to her presence, from the illustrious family to which she belonged having been natives of their province, sent a deputation to her, to entreat that she would fix among them her residence. To this request the Saint assented; and a habitation was immediately provided for herself and her sister nuns, which formed the commencement both of her great monastery and of the town or city of Kildare. The name of *Kill-dara*,‡ or Cell of the Oak, was given to the monastery, from a very high oak-tree which grew near the spot, and of which the trunk was still remaining in the twelfth century;—no one daring, as we are told by Giraldus, to touch it with a knife. The extraordinary veneration in which St. Brigid was held, caused such a resort of persons of all ranks to this place—such crowds of penitents, pilgrims, and mendicants—that a new town sprang up rapidly around her, which kept pace with the growing prosperity of the establishment. The necessity of providing spiritual direction, as well for the institution itself, as for the numerous settlers in the new town, led to the appointment of a bishop of Kildare, with the then usual privilege of presiding over all the churches and communities belonging to the order of St. Brigid, throughout the kingdom.

Among the eminent persons who were in the habit of visiting or corresponding with this remarkable woman, are mentioned St. Ailbe, or Emly, one of the fathers of the Irish church, and the Welsh author, Gildas, who is said to have sent to St. Brigid, as a token of his regard, a small bell cast by himself.§ By one of those violations of chronology not unfrequently hazarded for the purpose of bringing extraordinary personages together, an intimate friendship is supposed to have existed between St. Brigid and St. Patrick, and she is even said to have woven, at the apostle's own request, the shroud in which he was buried. But with this imagined intercourse between the two Saints, the dates of their respective lives are inconsistent; and it is but just possible that Brigid might have seen the great apostle of her country, as she was a child of about twelve years old when he died.

Among the miracles and gifts by which, no less than by her works of charity and holi-

* Ecclesiastical History of Ireland, by the Rev. John Lanigan, D. D.

† The bishop who admitted her into the number of Sacred Virgins, was named Maccaile, or Maccaleus; and the ceremony is thus described by her biographer, Cogitosus:—"Qui (Maccaleus) celeste intuens desiderium et pudicitiam, et tantum tastitatis amorem in tali virgine, pallium album et vestem candidam super ipsius venerabile caput imposuit."—Cap. 3.

‡ Illa jam cella Scotice dicitur *Kill-dara*, Latine vero sonat *Cella Quercus*. Quercus enim altissima ibi erat, cujus stipes adhuc manet.—*S. Brigid. Vita.*

§ A veneration for small portable bells, as well as for staves, which had once belonged to holy persons, was, in the time of Giraldus, common both among the laity and clergy. "Campanus baiulus, baculos quoque in superiori parte cameratos, auro et argento vel ære contectos, aliasque hujusmodi sanctorum reliquias, in magna reverentia tam Hyberniæ et Scotiæ, quam et Walliæ populus et clerus habere solent."—*Itiner. Camb.* lib. i. cap. 2. The same writer mentions the Campana Fugitiva of O'Toole, the chieftain of Wicklow; and we are informed by Colgan (in Triad.) that whenever St. Patrick's portable bell tolled, as a preservative against evil spirits and magicians, it was heard from the Giant's Causeway to Cape Clear, from the Hill of Howth to the western shores of Connemara, "per totam Hiberniam." See note on this subject in Hardman's Irish Minstrel, vol. i.

ness, the fame of St. Brigid and her numerous altars was extended, has always been mentioned, though on the sole authority of Giraldus Cambrensis, that perpetual Fire, at Kildare, over which, through successive ages, the holy virgins are said to have kept constant watch; and which, so late as the time of Giraldus, about six hundred years from the date of St. Brigid, was, as he tells us, still, unextinguished. Whether this rite formed any part of the Saint's original institution,* or it is to be considered but as an innovation of later times, it is, at all events, certain that at the time when Kildare was founded, the policy of converting to the purposes of the new faith those ancient forms and usages which had so long been made to serve as instruments of error, was very generally acted upon; and, in the very choice of a site for St. Brigid's monastery, the same principle is manifest; the old venerable oak, already invested with the solemnity of Druidical associations, having, in this, as in most other instances of religious foundations, suggested the selection of the spot where the Christian temple was to rise.

Having lived to reap the reward of her self-devotion and zeal, in the perfect success and even ascendancy of the institution which she had founded, St. Brigid closed her mortal course at Kildare, about A. D. 525, four years, it is calculated, after the birth of the great Culumbkill,† being herself, at the time of her death, about 74 years of age. The honour of possessing the remains of this holy woman was, for many centuries, contested not only by different parts of Ireland, but likewise by North Britain; the Irish of Ulster contending strenuously that she had been buried, not at Kildare, but in Down;‡ while the Picts as strongly insisted that Abernethy was her resting-place; and the British Scots, after annexing the Pictish territories to their own, paid the most fervent homage to her supposed relics in that city. But in no place, except at Kildare, was her memory cherished with such affectionate reverence as in that seat of all saintly worship, the Western Isles; where to the patronage of St. Brigid most of the churches were dedicated: by her name, one of the most solemn oaths of the islanders was sworn; and the first of February, every year, was held as a festival in her honour.§

It has been already observed that the eminent Irish Saint, Columbkill, has been often confounded, more especially by foreign writers, with his namesake, Columba, or Columbanus, whose fame, from the theatre of his holy labours having been chiefly France and Italy, has, among the people of the Continent, obscured or rather absorbed within its own light that of the apostle of the Western Isles. The time of the birth of St. Columbanus is placed about forty years later than that of Columbkill, A. D. 559; and though not of royal extraction, like his distinguished precursor, he appears to have been of a noble family, and also endowed by nature with what he himself considered to be a perilous gift, personal beauty. In order to escape the dangerous allurements of the world, he withdrew from his native province, Leinster; and, after some time passed in sacred studies, resolved to devote himself to a monastic life. The monastery of Bangor, in Ulster, already celebrated in Ireland, but by the subsequent career of St. Columbanus, rendered famous throughout all Europe, was the retreat chosen by this future antagonist of pontiffs and kings; and at that school he remained, under the discipline of the pious St. Congall, for many years. At length, longing for a more extended sphere of action, he resolved to betake himself to some foreign land; and having, at the desire of the abbot, selected from among his brethren, twelve worthy companions, turned his eyes to the state of the Gauls, or France, as requiring especially such a mission as he meditated. By the successive irruptions of the northern barbarians into that country, all the elements of civilized life had been dispersed, and a frightful process of demorilization was now rapidly taking place, to which a clergy, indolent and torpid,

A. D. 559.

* Dr. Lanigan repels indignantly the notion of Ledwich and others, that St. Brigid, and her sister nuns of Kildare, were "but a continuation of heathen Druidesses, who preserved from remotest ages an inextinguishable fire." There is, however, an ordinance of Scriptural authority, in which St. Brigid may have found a sanction for her shrines. "The fire upon the altar (of the tabernacle) shall be burning in it, and shall not be put out."—*Leviticus*, ch. vi. ver. 12. It was for contemning this inextinguishable fire, and using a profane fire in its stead, that the Levites Nadab and Abihu were miraculously put to death. See *Dr. Milner's Inquiry*, letter 11.

† According to other accounts, he was born about 539,—"A date much earlier," says Dr. Lanigan, "than that of Mabillon and others, but much more probable."

‡ The claims of Down to the possession of her remains, as well as of those of St. Patrick and St. Columbe, are commemorated in the following couplet, cited by Camden:—

"Hi tres in Duno tumulo tumulantur in uno
Brigida, Patricius atque Columba pius."

§ "From these considerations," says Macpherson, "we have reason to suspect that the Western Isles of Scotland were, in some one period or other, during the reign of popery, and perhaps in a great measure appropriated to St. Brigid."—*Crit. Dissert.*

In Gaelic, the name of Brigid is, according to this writer, Bride; and by *Hebrides*, or *Ey-brides*, is meant, he says, the Islands of Brigid.

and often even interested in the success of the spoilers, could oppose but a feeble check.* For a missionary, therefore, like Columbanus, full of courage in the cause of Christ, there could not have been selected a more inviting or productive field of enterprise.

Proceeding to the province which has been since called Franche Comté, one of the first acts of his ministry was to erect a monastery on a spot named Luxeuil, in a thick part of the forest, at the foot of the Vosges. From hence so widely was the fame of his sanctity diffused, and so great the concourse of persons, of all ranks, but more especially, as we are told, of young nobles, who came to profit by his instructions, and devote themselves to a religious life, that he found it necessary to establish a second monastery in the neighbourhood, to which, on account of the abundance of its springs, he gave the name of Fontaines.† In times, however, when the priest alone could present any effectual countercheck to the soldier, so active and daring a mind as that of the Abbot of Luxeuil could not long remain uninvolved in public strife; and his courageous frankness in reproving the vices of the young Thierry, King of Burgundy, drew upon him the enmity as well of that prince as of the fierce vindictive queen-dowager, Bruenehaut. The details of the scenes and transactions in which, so perilously to his own safety, the Irish Saint was brought into collision with these barbarian potentates, besides that they belong more properly to foreign history, would usurp a space, perhaps, disproportionate to their interest. They will be found worthy, however, of a brief, passing notice, less as history, than as pictures for the imagination, in which the figure of the stern but simple and accomplished missionary stands out to the eye with the more force and dignity from the barbaric glare and pomp of the scenes and personages around him.

Thus, on one occasion, when the queen-dowager, seeing him enter the royal courts, brought forth the four illegitimate children of King Thierry to meet him, the saint emphatically demanded what they wanted. "They are the king's children," answered Brunehaut, "and are come to ask your blessing."—"These children," replied Columbanus, "will never reign: they are the offspring of debauchery." Such insulting opposition to her designs for her grand-children roused all the rage of this Jezebel, and orders were issued withdrawing some privileges which the saint's monasteries had hitherto enjoyed. For the purpose of remonstrating against this wrong, he sought the palace of the king; and, while waiting the royal audience, rich viands and wines were served up for his refreshment. But the saint sternly refused to partake of them, saying, "It is written, 'the Most High rejects the gifts of the impious;' nor is it fitting that the mouths of the servants of God should be defiled with the viands of one who inflicts on them such indignities."

Another scene of the same description occurred subsequently at Luxeuil. The monastic Rule introduced into France by Columbanus, though afterwards incorporated, or rather confounded with that of St. Benedict,‡ was derived originally from the discipline established at the monastery of Bangor, in Ireland; and one of the regulations most objected to, in the system followed both at Luxeuil and Fontaines, was that by which access to the interior of these monasteries was restricted. On this point, as on many others, an attempt was made, by the revengeful Brunehaut, to excite a persecution against the saint; and the king, envenomed by her representations, was induced to join in her plans. Resolved to try the right of entrance in person, he proceeded, accompanied by a train of nobles, to the monastery; and finding Columbanus himself at the gate, said, as he forced his way in, "If you desire to derive any benefit from our bounty, these places must be thrown open to every comer." He had already got as far as the Refectory, when, with a courage worthy of a St. Ambrose, Columbanus thus addressed him:—"If you endeavour to violate the discipline here established, know that I dispense with your presents, and

* This state of things is acknowledged by the saint's biographer, Jonas:—"Ubi tunc vel ob frequentiam hostium externorum, vel negligentiam præsulum, religionis virtus pene abolita habebatur; fides tantum remanebat Christiana. Nam pœnitentiæ medicamentum et mortificationis amor vix vel paucis in illis reperiebatur locis."—*S. Columban. Vita.*

"The clergy of the Roman church," says Mr. James, (Hist. of Charlemange, Introduct.) "thickly spread over every part of Gaul, without excepting the dominions of Aquitaine and Burgundy, had already courted the Franks, even when governed by a heathen monarch; but now that he professed the same faith with themselves, they spared neither exertions nor intrigues to facilitate the progress of his conquests."

† In speaking of this monastery, the Benedictines say, "Fontaines n'est plus aujourdhui qu'un Prieuré dépendant de Luxeu." On the latter establishment they pronounce the following eulogium:—"Les grands hommes qui en sortirent en bon nombre, tant pour gouverner des églises entières que de simples monastères, répandirent en tant d'endroits les maximes salutaires de ce sacré désert que plusieurs de nos provinces parûrent avoir changé de face. Et à qui doit revenir la principale gloire de tous ces avantages, sinon à leur premier Instituer le B. Columban?"

‡ See, for several instances in which the two rules are thus confounded, Usher's Ecclesiar. Primord. 1050. "Non quod una eademque esset utriusque Regula; sed quod Columbani sectatores, majoris profectus ergo, duas illas celleberrimas asceticæ vitæ normas conjunxissent, quæ mediis hisce temporibus in Italia, Gallia, et Germania solæ enitebant et apparebant."—*Usser.*

with every aid that it is in your power to lend; and, if you now come hither to disturb the monasteries of the servants of God, I tell you that your kingdom shall be destroyed, and with it all your royal race." The king, terrified, it is said, by this denunciation, immediately withdrew.

A speech attributed to the Burgundian monarch, on this occasion, betrays no want either of tolerance or of the good sense from which that virtue springs. "I perceive you hope," said he to Columbanus, "that I shall give you the crown of martyrdom; but I am not so unwise as to commit so heinous a crime. As your system, however, differs from that of all other times, it is but right that you should return to the place from whence you came." Such a suggestion, from royal lips, was a command; but the noble Scot was not so easily to be separated either from the companions who had followed his fortunes from home, or those friendships he had formed in a strange land. "If they would have me depart," said he, "they must drag me from the cloister by force:"—and to these violent means it was found necessary, at last, to have recourse; a party of soldiers having been ordered by his royal persecutors to proceed to Luxeuil, and drive him from the monastery. The whole of the brotherhood expressed their readiness to follow their abbot to any part of the world; but none were allowed to accompany him except his own countrymen, and such few Britons as had attached themselves to the community. A corps of guards was sent to escort them on their route towards Ireland, and it was to the commander of this escort that, on their arrival at Auxerre, Columbanus pronounced that terrible prediction, as it has been called, of the union of all the crowns of France on the single head of Clotaire:—"Remember what I now tell you," said the intrepid monk; "that very Clotaire whom ye now despise will, in three years' time, be your master." A. D. 610.

On the arrival of the saint and his companions at Nantes, where it was meant to embark them for Ireland, a fortunate accident occurred to prevent the voyage; and he was still reserved for those farther toils in foreign lands to which he had felt himself called. Being now free to pursue his own course, he visited successively the courts of Clotaire and Theodobert, by both of whom he was received with marked distinction, and even consulted on matters vital to the interests of his kingdom by Clotaire. After an active course of missionary labours throughout various parts of France and Germany, the saint, fearful of again falling into the hands of his persecutors, Brunehaut and Thierry, whose powers of mischief their late successes had much strengthened, resolved to pass with his faithful companions into Italy; and, arriving at Milan, at the court of Agilulph, King of the Lombards, received from that sovereign and his distinguished queen, Theodelinda, the most cordial attentions.

It is supposed to have been during his stay at Milan that Columbanus addressed that spirited letter to Boniface IV., respecting the question of the Three Chapters, in which, distinguishing between the Chair of Rome and the individual who may, for the moment, occupy it, he shows how compatible may be the most profound and implicit reverence towards the papacy, with a tone of stern and uncompromising reprehension towards the pope. The decision of the Fifth General Council, held in the year 553, which condemned the writings known by the name of the Three Chapters, as heterodox, had met with considerable opposition from many of the Western bishops; and those of Histria and Liguria were the most obstinate in their schism. The Queen Theodelinda, who had so much distinguished herself in the earlier part of her reign by the vigour with which she had freed her kingdom from the inroads of Arianism, had, not many years before the arrival of Columbanus at Milan, awakened the alarm of the Roman court by treating with marked favour and encouragement the schismatic Bishops of Histria; and it was only by a course of skilful management that St. Gregory averted the danger, or succeeded in drawing back this princess to her former union with the church. It would appear, however, that, after the death of that great pope, the Lombard court had again fallen off into schism;—for it was confessedly at the strong instance of Agilulph himself, that Columbanus addressed his expostulatory letter to Pope Boniface;* and the views which he takes of the question in that remarkable document, are for the most part, those of the schismatics or defenders of the Three Chapters. Setting aside, however, all consideration of the saint's orthodoxy on this point,† his letter cannot but be allowed the

* Among other passages, to this purport, in his letter, is the following:—"A rege cogor ut sigillatim suggeram tuis piis auribus sui negotium doloris. Dolor namque suus est schisma populi pro regina, pro folio, forte et pro se ipso."

† The Benedictines thus account for the part which he took on this question:—"St. Columban, au reste, ne parle de la sorte dans cette lettre que parcequ'il était mal instruit de la grande affaire des Trois Chapitres; et qu'il avait été sans doute prévenu à ce suget par Agilulfe, qui s'en était déclaré le fauteur, et peut-être par quelques uns des schismatiques de Lombardie."—*Hist. Litt. de la France*, tom. iv.

A letter of Pope Gregory, on the subject of this now-forgotten controversy, has been erroneously supposed

praise of unshrinking manliness and vigour. Addressing Boniface himself in no very complaisant terms, he speaks of his predecessor, Pope Vigilius, with bitter and, in some respects, deserved reproach; declaring that pope to have been the prime mover of all the scandal that had occurred.* With national warmth, too, he boldly vindicates the perfect orthodoxy of his fellow-countrymen, the Irish, assuring Boniface that they had never yet swerved from the apostolic doctrines delivered to them by Rome; and that there had never been among them any heretics, Jews, or schismatics.†

Having received permission from King Agilulph to fix himself in whatever part of the Lombard dominions he should think fit, Columbanus selected a retired spot amidst the Appennines; and, founding there the monastery of Bobbio, passed in that retreat the brief remainder of his days; dying on the 21st of November, A. D. 615.‡

A. D. 615.

The various countries and places with which the name of this great saint is connected, have multiplied his lasting titles to fame. While Ireland boasts of his birth, and of having sent forth, before the close of the sixth century, so accomplished a writer from her schools, France remembers him by her ancient abbeys of Luxeuil and Fontaines; and his fame in Italy still lives, not only in the cherished relics at Bobbio,—in the coffin, the chalice, the holly staff of the founder, and the strange sight of an Irish missal in a foreign land,§—but in the yet fresher and more every day remembrance bestowed upon his name by its association with the beautifully situated town of San Columbano, in the territory of Lodi.

The writings of this eminent man that have come down to us display an extensive and varied acquaintance, not merely with ecclesiastical, but with classical literature. From a passage in his letter to Boniface, it appears that he was acquainted both with the Greek and Hebrew languages; and when it is recollected that he did not leave Ireland till he was nearly fifty years of age, and that his life afterwards was one of constant activity and adventure, the conclusion is obvious, that all this knowledge of elegant literature must have been acquired in the schools of his own country. Such a result from a purely Irish education, in the middle of the sixth century, is, it must be owned, not a little remarkable.‖ Among his extant works are some Latin poems, which, though not admissible, of course, to the honours of comparison with any of the writings of a classic age, shine out in this twilight period of Latin literature with no ordinary distinction.¶ Though wanting the free and fluent versification of his contemporary Fortunatus, he displays more energy both of thought and style; and, in the becoming gravity of his subjects, is distinguished honourably from the episcopal poet.** In his prose writings, the style of Columbanus is

to have been addressed to the Irish:—"Gregorius universis Episcopis ad Hiberniam," as the epistle is headed in some old editions of Gregory's works. But it is plain that "Hiberniam" has been substituted, by mistake, for "Histriam," in which latter country the schism on this point chiefly raged. See Dr. Lanigan, chap. 13, note 57.

* Vigila, quia forte non bene vigilavit Vigilius, quem caput scandali ipsi clamant.

† Nullus hæreticus, nullus Judæs, nullus schismaticus fuit: sed fides catholica, sicut a vobis primum, sanctorum scilicet apostolorum successoribus, tradita est, inconcussa tenetur.

‡ Among the poetical remains of Columbanus are some verses, of no inconsiderable merit, in which he mentions his having then reached the years of an eighteenth Olympiad. The poem is addressed to his friend Fedolius, and concludes as follows:—

"Hæc tibi dictâram morbis oppressus acerbis
Corpore quos fragili patior, tristique senectâ!
Nam dum præcipiti labuntur tempora cursu,
Nunc ad Olympiadis ter senos venimus annos.
Omnia prætereunt, fugit irreparabile tempus.
Vive, vale lætus, tristisque memento senectæ."

§ Dr. O'Connor supposes this missal to have been brought from Luxeuil to Bobbio by some followers of St. Columbanus:—"Ad horum vagantium (episcoporum) usum, codicem de quo agimus exaratum fuisse vel inde patet, quod fuerit Missale portabile, quod allatum fuerit seculo vilmo, ex Hibernorum monasterio Luxoviense in Gallia, ad Hibernorum monasterium Bobiense in Alpibus Cottiis.—*Ep. Nunc.*

‖ La Lumière que S. Columban répandit par son ecavoir et sa doctrine dans tous les lieux où il se montra l'a fait comparer par un écrivain du même siècle au soleil dans sa course de l'orient à l'occident. Il continua, après sa mort, de briller dans plusieurs disciples qu'il avait formés aux lettres et a la piété."—*Hist. Litt. de la France.*

The same learned writers, in speaking of the letters of St. Columbanus still extant, say,—"On a peu de monuments des vi. et vii. siècles où l'on trouve plus d'érudition ecclésiastique qu'il y en a dans les cinque lettres dont on vient de rendre compte."

¶ "On voit effectivement par la lecture de son poëme à Fedolius en particulier, qu'il possédait l'histoire et la fable. Quoique sa versification soit bien éloignée de la perfection de celle des anciens, elle ne laisse pas néanmoins d'avoir son mérite; et l'on peut assurer qu'il y a peu de poëtes de son temps qui aient mieux réussi à faire des vers."—*Hist. Litt., &c.*, par des Religieux Benedictins.

** Those who are at all acquainted with the verses of this bishop, written, most of them, "inter pocula,"—as he himself avows, in his Dedicatory Epistle to Pope Gregory,—will be inclined to agree that it was not difficult to surpass him in decorum.

somewhat stiff and inflated; more especially in the letters addressed by him to high dignitaries of the church, where the effort to elevate and give force to his diction is often too visible to be effective. In the moral instructions, however, written for his monks, the tone both of style and thought is, for the most part, easy and unpretending.

CHAPTER XIII.

DISPUTES RESPECTING THE PASCHAL COMPUTATION.—LEARNED IRISH MISSIONARIES OF THE SEVENTH, EIGHTH, AND NINTH CENTURIES.

On the question respecting the time of keeping Easter, which, about the beginning of the seventh century, produced such a contest between the British and Irish clergy on one side, and the church of Rome and her new missionaries in Britain upon the other, some letters were addressed by Columbanus to the Gallican bishops and the pope; in which, defending the Paschal system, as it had been always observed by his countrymen, he requests "to be allowed to follow the tradition of his elders, in so far as it is not contrary to faith." Though upon a point by no means essential as regarded either faith or discipline, yet so eagerly was this controversy entered into by the learned Irish of that day, and with so much of that attachment to old laws and usages which has at all periods distinguished them, that a brief account of the origin and nature of the dispute forms a necessary part of the history of those times.

Very early in the annals of the Christian church, a difference of opinion with respect to the time of celebrating Easter had arisen; and it was not till the great Council of Nice, A. D. 325, had prescribed a rule by which the day of this festival was to be fixed, that, throughout the Asiatic and Western churches, a uniformity of practice in the time of celebrating it was observed. Owing to the difference, however, of the cycles, used by different churches, in making their calculations, it was soon found, that to preserve this desired uniformity would be a matter of much difficulty. By the decree of the Council of Nice it was fixed, that the Paschal festival should be held on the Sunday next after the fourteenth day of the first lunar month. In determining this time, however, the church of Rome and the church of Alexandria differed materially; the former continuing to compute by the old Jewish cycle of eighty-four years, while the latter substituted the cycle of nineteen years, as corrected by Eusebius; and the consequence was a difference, sometimes of nearly a month, between the Alexandrian and Roman calculations.

When St. Patrick came on his mission to Ireland, he introduced the same method of Paschal computation, namely, by the cycle of eighty-four years, which was then practised at Rome, and which the apostle taught as he had learned it in Gaul from Sulpicius Severus, by whom a change only of the mode of reckoning the days of the moon was introduced into it. To this method the Irish as well as the British churches continued to adhere, until subsequently to the arrival of Augustine upon his mission to Britain. In the mean time, the Romans, having in vain endeavoured, by conference and concession, to adjust the differences between the Alexandrian calculations and their own, thought it advisable, for the sake of peace, to try a new method; and the cycle of Dionysius Exiguus, framed about 525, being in agreement with the Alexandrian method and rules, was adopted by them about the middle of the sixth century.

From the little communication that took place between the churches of the British Isles and Rome—owing to the troubled state of the intervening nations, and the occupation of the coasts of Britain by the Saxons—nothing was known in these countries of the adoption of a new cycle by Rome; and, accordingly, when Augustine and his brethren arrived, they found both the British and the Irish in perfect ignorance of the reformation which had, in the interim, been made, and computing their Easter by the old cycle of eighty-four years, as formerly practised at Rome. In one particular alone, the change introduced by Sulpicius, did the Irish church—to which my remarks shall henceforward be confined—differ from the system originally pursued by the Romans; and this difference, which was, in reality, rather a correction of the old Roman cycle than a departure from

[illegible] the fourteenth day of the month, as fit for the celebration of Easter, if falling on a Sunday. The fourteenth day had long been in disrepute throughout Christendom, both as being the day on which the Jews always celebrate their Pasch, and as having been the time chosen for that festival by the Quartodeciman heretics. But there was this material difference between their practice and that of the Irish, that, while the Jews and Asiatic heretics celebrated Easter always on the fourteenth day of the moon, be it [illegible] on whatever day of the week it might, the Irish never held that festival on the fourteenth, unless it were a Sunday. The Roman missionaries, however, chose to keep this essential difference out of sight; and unjustly confounding the Easter of the Irish with that of the Judaising Quartodecimans, involved in one common charge of heresy all who still adhered to the old Roman rule.†

With their usual fondness for ancient usages, the Irish persisted in following the former rule; and, in the spirit with which Columbanus, as we have seen, took up the question against the Gallican bishops, he faithfully represented and anticipated the feelings of his fellow-countrymen. The first we hear, however, of the dispute, in Ireland, occurs on the occasion of a letter addressed, in 609, by Laurence, the successor of Augustine and his brother missionaries, to the Irish bishops or abbots. In this Exhortatory Epistle, as Bede styles it, Laurence expresses the disappointment felt by himself and his fellow bishops on finding that the Scots, equally with the Britons, had departed from the universal custom of the church. The warmth with which the dispute was, at this time, entered into by some of the clergy of Ireland, appears, from a circumstance mentioned in this letter, of an Irish bishop, Dagan, who, on visiting the Roman missionaries, refused not only to eat in company with them, but even under the same roof.

A. D. 609.

From this period the question seems to have been left open for more than twenty years: some few among the clergy of Ireland being not unwilling, as it seems, to adopt the new Roman discipline; while others thought it sufficient to conform so far to Rome, as to substitute the 16th day of the moon, in their Paschal Canon, for the 14th; and the great bulk of the clergy and people continued attached to their old traditional mode. At length, the attention of the Roman See was, in the year 630, drawn to the dispute; and a letter was addressed by Honorius to the nation of the Scots, in which he earnestly exhorts them "not to consider their own small number, placed in the utmost borders of the earth, as wiser than all the ancient and modern churches of Christ throughout the world; nor to continue to celebrate an Easter contrary to the Paschal calculation and to the synodical decrees of all the bishops upon earth." In consequence of this admonitory letter, a Synod was held in Campo-lene, near Old Leighlin, where it was agreed, after some strenuous opposition from St. Fintan Munnu, of Taghmon, that Easter should, in future, be celebrated at the same time with the universal church. This decree, however, having been rendered abortive by some subsequent intrigue, it was resolved by the elders of the church, that, in pursuance of an ancient canon, by which it was directed that every important ecclesiastical affair should be referred to the Head of Cities, some wise and humble persons should be, on the present occasion, sent to Rome, "as children to their mother." A deputation was accordingly despatched to that city, who, on their return within three years after, declared that they had seen, in the see of St. Peter, the Greek, the Hebrew, the Scythian, and the Egyptian, all celebrating the same Easter Day, in common with the whole catholic world, and differing from that of the Irish by an entire month.‡ In consequence of this report of the deputies, which must have been received about the year 633, the new Roman cycle and rules were, from that period, universally adopted throughout the southern division of Ireland.

A. D. 631.

A. D. 633.

However disproportioned to the amount of discussion which it occasioned was the real importance of the point of discipline now at issue, the effects of the controversy, in as

* Usher thus explains this correction:—"Quum autem Sulpitius Severus *bidui* illum inter Cycli Alexandrini et Romani neomenias observavisset discrepantiam, vidissetque Romanis *decimamsextam* lunam numeratam quæ Alexandrinis, cælo etiam demonstrante (uti ex Cyrillo retulimus) erat tantum *decimaquarta*, hunc Romani calculi errorem ita emendandum censuit, ut non jam amplius a XVI. ad XXII., sed a XIV. luná ad XX. ex antiquo illo annorum 84 laterculo Dominicæ Paschales excerperentur.

† Thus, in the letter of the clergy of Rome, cited by Bede (l. ii. c. 19.)—"Reperimus quosdam provinciæ vestræ, contra orthodoxam fidem novam ex veteri hæresim renovare conantes, Pascha nostrum in quo immolatus est Christus nebulosa caligine refutantes, et quartodecima luna cum Hebræis celebrare nitentes." Either ignorantly or wilfully, Dr. Ledwich has fallen into the same misrepresentation, and, unmindful of the important difference above stated, accuses the Irish church, at this period, of quartodecimanism.

‡ "Misimus quos novimus sapientes et humiles esse, velut natos ad matrem; et prosperum iter in voluntate Dei habentes, et ad Romam urbem aliqui ex eis venientes, tertio anno ad nos usque pervenerunt; et sic omnia viderunt sicut audierunt: sed et valde certiora, utpote visa quam audita invenerunt; et in uno hospitio cum Græco et Hebræo, Scythâ et Ægyptiaco, in Ecclesia sancti Petri simul in Paschâ (in quo mense integro disjuncti sumus) fuerunt."—*Epist. Cummian. Hibern. ad Segienum Iluensem, Abbat. de Controvers. Paschal.* See Usher's Vet. Epist. Hibernic. SyHog.

far as it promoted scientific inquiry, and afforded a stimulant to the wits of the disputants, on both sides, could not be otherwise than highly favourable to the advancement of the public mind. The reference to the usages of other countries to which it accustomed the Irish scholars, tended, in itself, to enlarge the sphere of their observation and proportionally liberalize their views; nor was it possible to engage in the discussion of a question so closely connected both with astronomy and arithmetic, without some proficiency in those branches of knowledge by which alone it could be properly sifted or judged. Accordingly, while, on one side of the dispute, St. Columbanus supported eloquently the cause of his countrymen, abroad, adducing, in defence of their practice, no less learned authority than that of Anatolius, Bishop of Laodicea; at home, another ingenious Irishman, St. Cummian, still more versed in the studies connected with this subject, produced, on the Roman side of the question, such an array of learning and proofs as would, in any age, have entitled his performance to respect, if not admiration. Enforcing the great argument derived from the unity of the church,* which he supports by the authority of all the most ancient fathers, Greek as well as Latin, he passes in review the various cyclical systems that had previously been in use, pointing out their construction and defects, and showing himself acquainted with the chronological characters, both natural and artificial. The various learning, indeed, which this curious tract displays, implies such a facility and range of access to books as proves the libraries of the Irish students, at that period, to have been, for the times in which they lived, extraordinarily well furnished.

This eminent man, St. Cummian, who had been one of those most active and instrumental in procuring the adoption of the Roman system by the Irish of the south, and thereby incurred the serious displeasure of the Abbot and Monks of Hy, under whose jurisdiction, as a monk of their order, he was placed, and who continued longer than any other of their monastic brethren to adhere to the old Irish method, in consequence of its having been observed by their venerable founder, St. Columba. In defence of himself and those who agreed with him in opinion, St. Cummian wrote the famous treatise just alluded to, in the form of an Epistle addressed to Segienus, Abbot of Hy; and the learning, ability, and industry with which he has executed his task, must, even by those most inclined to sneer at the literature of that period, be regarded as highly remarkable.

Though the southern half of Ireland had now received the new Roman method, the question continued to be still agitated in the northern division, where a great portion of the clergy persisted in the old Irish rule; and to the influence exercised over that part of the kingdom by the successors of St. Columba this perseverance is, in a great measure, to be attributed. It is worthy of remark, however, that notwithstanding the intense eagerness of the contest, not merely in Ireland, but wherever, in Britain, the Irish clergy preached, a spirit of fairness and tolerance was mutually exercised by both parties; nor was the schism of any of those venerable persons who continued to oppose themselves to the Roman system allowed to interfere with or at all diminish the reverence which their general character for sanctity inspired. Among other instances of this tolerant spirit may be mentioned the tribute of respect paid publicly to St. Fintin Munnu, by his zealous adversary, Laserian, in the course of their contest respecting the new Paschal rule. A yet more historical instance is presented in the case of Aidan, the great apostle of the Northumbrians, who, though a strenuous opponent of the Roman Paschal system, continued to be honoured no less in life and after death, by even those persons who had the most vehemently differed with him.

The connexion of this venerable Irishman, St. Aidan, with the Anglo-Saxon King Oswald, illustrates too aptly the mutual relations of their respective countries, at this period, to be passed over without some particular notice. During the reign of his uncle Edwin, the young Oswald had lived, an exile, in Ireland, and having been instructed, while there, in the doctrines of Christianity, resolved, on his accession to the throne, to disseminate the same blessing among his subjects. With this view he applied to the Elders of the Scots, among whom he had himself been taught, desiring that they would furnish him with a bishop, through whose instruction and ministry the nation of the English he had been called to govern might receive the Christian faith. In compliance with the royal desire, a monk of Hy, named Aidan, was sent; to whom, on his arrival, the king gave, as the seat of his see, the small Island of Lindisfarne, or, as it has been since called, Holy Isle. In the spiritual labours of the Saint's mission the pious Oswald took constantly a share; and it was often, says Bede, a delightful spectacle to witness,

* Quid autem pravius sentiri potest de Ecclesia matre quam si dicamus, Roma errat, Hierosolyma errat, Alexandria errat, Antiocha errat, totus mundus errat: soli tantum Scoti et Britones rectum sapiunt.—Epist. Cummian.

that when the bishop, who knew but imperfectly the English tongue, preached the truths of the Gospel, the king himself, who had become master of the Scotic language during his long banishment in Ireland, acted as interpreter of the word of God to his commanders and ministers.* From that time, continues the same authority, numbers of Scotish, or Irish, poured daily into Britain, preaching the faith, and administering baptism through all the provinces over which King Oswald reigned. In every direction churches were erected, to which the people flocked with joy to hear the word. Possessions were granted, by royal bounty, for the endowment of monasteries and schools, and the English, old and young, were instructed by their Irish masters in all religious observances.†

Having now allowed so long a period of Irish history to elapse, without any reference whatever to the civil transactions of the country, it may naturally be expected that I should for a while digress from ecclesiastical topics, and, leaving the lives of ascetic students and the dull controversies of the cloister, seek relief from the tame and monotonous level of such details in the stirring achievements of the camp, the feuds of rival chieftains, or even in the pomps and follies of a barbaric court. But the truth is, there exist in the Irish annals no materials for such digression,—the Church forming, throughout these records, not merely, as in the history of most other countries, a branch or episode of the narrative, but its sole object and theme. In so far, indeed, as a quick succession of kings may be thought to enliven history, there occurs no want of such variety in the annals of Ireland; the lists of her kings, throughout the whole course of the Milesian monarchy, exhibiting but too strongly that unerring mark of a low state of civilization. The time of duration allowed by Newton, in his Chronology, to the reigns of monarchs in settled and civilized kingdoms is, at a medium, as much as eighteen years for each reign. In small, uncivilized kingdoms, however, the medium allowed is not more than ten or eleven years; and at this average were the reigns of the Kings of Northumbria under the Saxon heptarchy.‡ What then must be our estimate of the political state of Ireland at this period, when we find that, from the beginning of the reign of Tuathal, A. D. 533, to the time of the great plague, 664, no less than fifteen monarchs had successively filled the Irish throne, making the average of their reigns, during that period, little more than eight years each. With the names of such of these princes as wielded the sceptre since my last notice of the succession, which brought its series down to A. D. 599, it is altogether unnecessary to encumber these pages; not one of them having left more than a mere name behind, and, in general, the record of their violent deaths being the only memorial that tells of their ever having lived.

In order to convey to the reader any adequate notion of the apostolical labours of that crowd of learned missionaries whom Ireland sent forth, in the course of this century, to all parts of Europe, it would be necessary to transport him to the scenes of their respective missions; to point out the difficulties they had to encounter, and the admirable patience and courage with which they surmounted them; to show how inestimable was the service they rendered, during that dark period, by keeping the dying embers of learning awake, and how gratefully their names are enshrined in the records of foreign lands, though but faintly, if at all, remembered in their own. It was, indeed, then, as it has been ever since, the peculiar fate of Ireland, that both in talent, and the fame that honourably rewards it, her sons prospered far more triumphantly abroad than at home; for while, of the many who confined their labours to their native land, but few have left those remembrances behind which constitute fame, those who carried the light of their talent and zeal to other lands, not only founded a lasting name for themselves, but made their country also a partaker of their renown, winning for her that noble title of the

* Ubi pulcherrimo sæpe spectaculo contigit, ut evangelizante antistite, qui Anglorum linguam pefectè non noverat, ipse Rex suis ducibus ac ministris interpres verbi existeret cœlestis, quia nimirum tam longo exilii sui tempore linguam Scotorum jam plene didicerat.—Lib. iii. cap. 3.

† Exin' cœpere plures per dies de Scotorum regione venire Britanniam atque illis Anglorum provinciis, quibus regnavit rex Osvald, magna devotione verbum Dei prædicare.—*Bede*, lib. iii. cap. 3. "As these preachers (says Dr. Lanigan) came over from *the land of the Scots to Britain*, it is plain that they came from Ireland; for the land of British Scots was itself in Britain; and accordingly Lloyd states (chap. v. §. 5.,) that these auxiliaries of Aidan 'came out of Ireland.' Thus also Fleury (lib. xxxviii. § 19.) calls them 'Missionaires Irlandois.'"—*Ecclesiast. Hist.* chap. xv. note 103.

It was hardly worthy of Doctor Lingard's known character for fairness, to follow the example so far of Dempster, and other such writers, as to call our eminent Irish missionaries, at this period, by the ambiguous name of Scotish monks, without at the same time informing his readers that these distinguished men were Scots of Ireland. The care with which the ecclesiastical historians of France and Italy have in general marked this distinction, is creditable alike to their fairness and their accuracy.

‡ To judge from the following picture, however, their state was little better than that of the Irish:—"During the last century (the eighth,) Northumbria had exhibited successive instances of treachery and murder to which no other country perhaps can furnish a parallel. Within the lapse of a hundred years, fourteen kings had assumed the sceptre, and yet of all these one only, if one, died in the peaceable possession of royalty; seven had been slain, six had been driven from the throne by their rebellious subjects."

Island of the Holy and the Learned, which, throughout the night that overhung all the rest of Europe, she so long and proudly wore. Thus, the labours of the great missionary, St. Columbanus, were, after his death, still vigorously carried on, both in France and Italy, by those disciples who had accompanied or joined him from Ireland; and his favourite Gallus, to whom, in dying, he bequeathed his pastoral staff, became the founder of an abbey in Switzerland, which was in the thirteenth century erected into a principedom, while the territory belonging to it has, through all changes, borne the name of St. Gall.* From his great assiduity in promulgating the Gospel, and training up disciples capable of succeeding him in the task, this pious Irishman has been called, by a foreign martyrologist, the Apostle of the Allemanian nation. Another disciple and countryman of St. Columbanus, named Deicola, or in Irish Dichuill, enjoyed, like his master, the patronage and friendship of the monarch Clotaire II., who endowed the monastic establishment formed by him at Luthra, with considerable grants of land.

In various other parts of France, similar memorials of Irish sanctity may be traced.† At the celebrated monastery of Centula, in Ponthied, was seen a tomb, engraved with golden letters, telling that there lay the remains of the venerable priest, Caidoc, "to whom Ireland gave birth, and the Gallic land a grave."‡ The site of the hermitage of St. Fiacre, another Irish Saint, was deemed so consecrated a spot, that to go on a pilgrimage thither was, to a late period, a frequent practice among the devout; and we are told of the pious Anne of Austria, that when, in 1641, she visited the shrine of this saint, so great was the humility of her devotion, that she went the whole of the way, from Monceau to the town of Fiacre, on foot.§ Among the number of holy and eminent Irishmen who thus extended their labours to France, must not be forgotten St. Fursa,‖ who after preaching among the East Angles, and converting many from Paganism, passed over into France; and, building a monastery at Lagny, near the river Marne, remained there, spreading around him the blessings of religious instruction, till his death. A. D. 650.

In like manner, through most of the other countries of Europe, we hear of the progress of some of these adventurous spirits, and track the course of their fertilizing footsteps through the wide waste of ignorance and paganism which then prevailed.** In Brabant, the brothers of St. Furso, Ultan and Foillan, founded an establishment which was long

* In speaking of the learning displayed by St. Cummian in his famous Letter on the Paschal question, I took occasion to remark on the proof which it affords of the existence of libraries, at that period, in Ireland, and by no means ill or scantily furnished. From a circumstance mentioned by the ecclesiastical historians of an Irish bishop, named Mark, who visited the monastery of St. Gall, about the middle of the ninth century, it would appear that the Irish were, at that time, even able to contribute to the libraries of their fellow countrymen on the Continent. The fact is thus stated by the Benedictines:—"Il s'y vient alors habituer un évêque Hibernois nommé Marc, dont la rétraite fut avantageuse aux études, tant par les livres dont il augmenta la bibliotbèque que par les personnes qu'il avoit à sa suite. Entre ceux-ci étoit un neveu, à qui le nom barbare de Moengal fut changé en celui de Marcel, et un Eusebe, autre homme de lettres, et Hibernois, comme les précédens." The learned writers then add the following interesting remark respecting the Irish of that period in general:—"On a déja remarqué ailleurs que les gens de ce pays, presqu'à l'extrémité du monde, avoient mieux conservé la littérature, parcequ'ils étoient moins exposés aux revolutions que les autres parties de l'Europe."

† Ce commerce de littérature entres les Gaules et les Iles Britanniques, en genre de s'entrecommuniquer leurs connoisances sur les lettres et la doctrine, et de se prêter de grands hommes pour les répandre, devint mutuel depuis que S. Gildas, S. Columban, et plusieurs autres Hibernois, presque tous gens de lettres, se retirèrent dans nos provinces.—*Hist. Littér. de la France*, tom. iv.

‡ Mole sub hac tegitur Caidocus jure sacerdos,
Scotia quem genuit, Gallica terra tegit.

The burial-place of this saint, who died at Centula, towards the middle of the seventh century, was repaired by Angilbert, abbot of that monastery, in the reign of Charlemange, when the epitaph from which the above couplet is cited was inscribed upon the tomb.

§ L'ermitage de Saint Fiacre est devenu un bourg de la Brie, fameux par les pélérinages que l'on y faisoit; l'église ou chapelle étoit desservie par les Bénédictins; les femmes n'entroient point dans le sanctuaire, et l'on remarque que la Reine Anne d'Autriche, y venant en pélérinage en 1641, se conforma à cet usage, et qu'elle fit même à pied le chemin depuis Monceau jusqu'à Saint-Fiacre."—*Hist. de Meaux.*

It is said in another work, relating to this saint, "On a prétendu que le nom de Fiacres avoit été donné aux carosses de place, parcequ'ils furent d'abord destinés à voiturer jusqu'à St. Fiacre (en Brie) les Parisiens qui y allerent en pélérinage."

‖ This saint was of royal descent:—"Erat autem vir ille de nobilissimo genere Scotorum."—*Bede*, I. iii. c. 19. In the same chapter will be found an account of those curious visions or revelations of St. Fursa, which are supposed by the Benedictines to have been intended to shadow forth the political and moral corruption of the higher orders in Ireland:—"On s'appercoit sans peine qu'elles tendent à réprimer les désordres qui régnoient alors parmi les Princes, les Evéques, et les autres ecclésiastiques d'Hibernie, où le saint les avoit eues. Elles taxent principalement leur avarice, leur oisiveté, le peu de soin qu'ils prenoient de s'instruire et d'instruire les autres."

** "In the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries (says Macpherson,) religion and learning flourished in Ireland to such a degree, that it was commonly styled the mother country of saints, and reputed the kingdom of arts and sciences. The Saxons and Angles sent thither many of their princes and princesses to have the benefit of a pious and learned education. It ought, likewise, to be acknowledged, that some of the most eminent teachers of North Britain received their instruction at the Irish seminaries of literature and religion."

called the Monastery of the Irish; and the elegant scholar, St. Livin,* whom, by his own verses, we trace to the tomb of St. Bavo,† in Ghent, proceeded from thence, on a spiritual mission, through Flanders and Brabant, prepared at every step for that crown of martyrdom, which at length, from the hands of Pagans, he suffered.‡ With the same enterprising spirit we find St. Fridolin, surnamed the Traveller,—a native, it is supposed, of Connaught,—exploring the Rhine for some uninhabited island, and at length fixing himself upon Seckingen, where he founded a church, and a religious house for females, which he lived to see prosper under his own eyes. Next to the generous self-devotion of these holy adventurers, thus traversing alone the land of the infidel and the stranger, the feeling of gratitude with which after-ages have clung to their names, forms one of the most pleasing topics of reflection which history affords; and few, if any, of our Irish missionaries left behind them more grateful recollections than, for centuries, consecrated every step of the course of Fridolin the Traveller, through Lorraine, Alsace, Germany, and Switzerland.

In the month of May, 664, that solar eclipse took place, the accurate record of which by the Irish chroniclers, I have already had occasion to notice. This phenomenon, together with the singular aspect of the sky, which, during the whole summer, as we are told, seemed to be on fire, was regarded generally, at the time, as foretokening some fatal calamity, and the frightful pestilence which immediately after broke out, both in England and Ireland, seemed but too fully to justify the superstitious fear. This Yellow Plague, as the dreadful malady was called, having made its appearance first on the Southern coasts of Britain, spread from thence to Northumbria, and, about the beginning of August, reached Ireland, where, in the course of the three years during which its ravages lasted, it is computed to have swept off two-thirds of the inhabitants. Among its earliest victims were the two royal brothers, Diermit and Blathmac, who held jointly at this period the Irish throne; and Bede mentions also, in the number of sufferers, some natives of England, both noble and of lower rank, who had retired to Ireland, as he expresses it, "to pursue a course of sacred studies, and lead a stricter life." It is in mentioning this interesting fact, that the historian adds, so honourably to the Irish, that they most cheerfully received all these strangers, and supplied them gratuitously with food, with books, and instruction.§

A. D. 664.

While thus from England such numbers crowded to these shores, and either attached themselves to a monastic life, or visited the cells of the different monasteries in pursuit of general knowledge, Irish scholars were, with a similar view, invited into Britain. The Island of Hy, which was inhabited by Irish monks, furnished teachers to all the

* "Voici encore un écrivain," say the Benedictines, "que la France est en droit de partager avec l'Hibernie, qui lui donna naissance."

† The epitaph which this saint wrote upon St. Bavo, and the epistle addressed by him to his friend Florbert, in sending him the epitaph, may both be found in Usher's Vet. Epist. Hiberniarum Sylloge. Of these two poems Dr. Lanigan remarks, that they "are very neat compositions, and do great honour to the classical taste of the Irish schools of that period, while barbarism prevailed in the greatest part of Western Europe."—Chap. vi. § 12.

‡ In his epistle to Florbert, the Saint thus anticipates the doom of martyrdom that awaited him:—

Impia Barbarico gens exagitata tumultu
Hic Brabanta furit, meque cruenta petit
Quid tibi peccavi, qui pacis nuntia porto?
Pax est quod porto; cur mihi bella moves?
Sed quâ tu spiras feritas sors læta triumphi,
Atque dabit palmam gloria martyrii.

The following verses from this epistle, in reference to the task which his friend Florbert had imposed upon him, may not, perhaps, be thought unworthy of citation:—

Et pius ille pater cum donis mollia verba
Mittit, et ad studium sollicitat precibus.
Ac titulo magnum jubet insignire *Bavonem*,
Atq' leves elegos esse decus tumulo.
Nec reputat, fisso cùm stridet fistula ligno,
Quod soleat raucum reddere quassa sonum.
Exigui rivi pauper quam vena ministrat
Lasso vix tenues unda ministra opem.
Sic ego qui quondam studio florente videbar
Esse poëta, modò curro pedester equo.
Et qui Castalio dicebar fonte madentem
Dictæo versu posse movere Lyram,
Carmine nunc lacero dictant mihi verba Camœnæ;
Mensq'ue dolens lætis apta nec est modulis.
Non sum qui fueram festivo carmine lætus:
Qualiter esse queam, tela cruenta videns?

§ On this, Ledwich remarks:—"So zealous and disinterested a love of learning is unparalleled in the annals of the world."

more northern regions; and the appointment of three natives of Ireland, in succession, to the new see of Lindisfarne, proves how grateful a sense of the services of that nation the Northumbrian princes of this period entertained. At the time we are speaking of, the bishop of this see was Colman, a monk of the Columbian order, who had been sent from Ireland for the purpose of filling that high dignity. Like all the rest of the clergy of his order, he adhered to the Irish mode of celebrating Easter, and the dispute respecting that point received a new recruitment of force from his accession, as well as from the scruples of the intelligent Alchfrid, son of King Oswin, who, while his father, a convert and pupil of the Irish, "saw nothing better," says Bede, "than what they taught," was inclined to prefer to their traditions the canonical practice now introduced from Rome.* In consequence of the discussions to which this difference gave rise, a memorable conference was held on the subject, at Whitby; where, in the presence of the two kings, Oswin and Alchfrid, the arguments of each party were temperately and learnedly brought forward; the Bishop Colman, with his Irish clergy, speaking in defence of the old observances of their country, while Wilfrid, a learned priest, who had been recently to Rome, undertook to prove the truth and universality of the Roman method. The scene of the controversy was in a monastery, or nunnery, over which Hilda, a distinguished abbess, presided,—herself and all her community being favourers, we are told, of the Irish system. The debate was carried on in Irish and Anglo-Saxon, the venerable Cead, an English bishop, acting as interpreter between the parties; and the whole proceeding but wanted a worthier or more important subject of discussion to render it, in no ordinary degree, striking and interesting.†

After speeches and replies on both sides, of which Bede has preserved the substance, the king and the assembly at large agreed to give their decision in favour of Wilfrid; and Colman, silenced but not convinced, resolving still to adhere to the tradition of his fathers, resigned the see of Lindisfarne, and returned to his home in Ireland, taking along with him all the Irish monks, and about thirty of the English, belonging to that establishment.‡

The great mistake which pervaded the arguments of the Roman party, upon this question, lay in their assumption—whether wilfully or from ignorance—that the method of computation which they had introduced was the same that Rome had practised from the very commencement of her church; whereas, it was not till the middle of the fifth century that the Romans themselves were induced, for the sake of peace and unity, to exchange their old cycle of eighty-four years for a new Paschal system. By another gross error of the same party, which seems also liable to the suspicion of having been wilful, the Easter of the Irish was confounded with the Quartodeciman Pasch, though between the two observances, as we have already seen, there was an essential difference.§ But the fundamental error of both parties in the contest was, the importance attached unduly by each of them to a point of mere astronomical calculation, unconnected with either faith or morals; and while the Irish were, no doubt, censurable for persisting with so much obstinacy in a practice which, besides being indifferent in itself, was at variance with the general usage of Christendom, their opponents were no less to be blamed for their want of charity and good sense in raising, on so slight a point of difference and discipline, the cry of heresy and schism.

A dispute of a still more trifling nature, and bordering closely, it must be owned, on the ridiculous, was, by the English followers of the Roman missionaries, mixed up, throughout, with the Paschal question, and, in a subordinate degree, made to share its fortunes. This dispute related to the tonsure, or mode of shaving the head, practised respectively by the Roman and Irish clergy: the former of whom shaved or clipped the

* An edifying instance of the tolerance of that period is afforded in the following fact, mentioned by Bede:—The Queen of Eanfled, who had lived in Kent, and who had with her a Kentish priest, named Romanus, followed the Roman Easter, while the King Oswin celebrated the Irish Easter; and it sometimes happened, says Bede, that while the king, bishop, &c. were enjoying the Paschal festivity, the queen and her followers were still fasting the Lent.

† Among other persons present at the discussion, was Agilbert, a native of France, who, for the purpose of studying the Scriptures, as Bede tells us, had passed a considerable time in Ireland. "Venit in provinciam de Hibernia pontifex quidam, nomine Agilberctus, natione quidem Gallus, sed tunc legendarum gratia Scripturarum in Hibernia non parvo tempore demoratus."—Lib. iii. c. 7.

‡ To the monastery built by Colman for his English followers, at Mayo, (Bede, l iv. c. 4,) a number of other monks of that nation attached themselves; and, in the time of Adamnan, towards the close of the seventh century, there were about one hundred Saxon or English saints at that place, which, from thence, was called by the name of *Maigh-eona-Saxon*, or Mayo of the English. For this fact, Usher refers to the book of Ballimote:—"Quo in loco, uti Bedæ elate grande Anglorum fuisse monasterium audivimus, ita etiam S. Cormaci, et Adamnani tempore *centum Saxonicorum Sanctorum* fuisse habitaculum, libri Ballimotensis collector confirmat."—*Eccles. Primord.*

§ Inheriting fully the same perverse feeling against the Irish, Dr. Ledwich has, in the same manner, misrepresented them on this subject; endeavouring to make out that St. Columba and his successors were all Quartodecimans. See an able refutation of his views on this point by Dr. Lanigan, chap. xii. note 236.

crown of the head, leaving the hair to grow in a circle all round it; while the Irish, allowing the hair to cover the back of the head, shaved or clipped it away, in the form of a crescent, from the front. Both parties, with equal confidence, and, it may be added, ignorance, appealed to antiquity in support of their respective tonsures; while, on the part of the Irish, the real motive for clinging so fondly to their old custom was, that it had been introduced among them, with all their other ecclesiastical rules and usages, by the national apostle, St. Patrick. According as their Paschal rule, however, gave way, this form of the tonsure followed its fate; and in a Canon, the date of which is supposed to be about the seventh or eighth century, we find an order for the observance of the Roman tonsure.

However constantly the kings of Ireland, at this period, were, as her annals record, in conflict with each other, that perfect security from foreign invasion which she had through so long a course of ages enjoyed, still continued to be inviolate. A slight interruption, however, of this course of good fortune,—as if to break the spell hitherto guarding her,—occurred towards the close of this century, when, notwithstanding the habitual relations of amity between the Northumbrians and the Irish, an expedition, commanded by the general of Egfrid, King of Northumberland, landed on the eastern coast of Ireland, and ravaging the whole of the territory, at that time called Bregia, spared, as the annals tell us, neither people nor clergy, and carried off with them a number of captives, as well as considerable plunder. This sudden and, apparently, wanton aggression is supposed to have been owing to the offence taken by Egfrid at the protection afforded by the Irish to his brother, Alfrid, who was then an exile in their country.* Availing himself of the leisure which his period of banishment afforded, this intelligent prince had become a proficient in all the studies of his age: nor was he the only royal foreigner who, in those times, found a shelter in Ireland, as Dagobert, the son of the King of Austrasia, had, not long before, been educated there in a monastery; and, after a seclusion of many years, being recalled from thence to his own country, became sovereign of all Austrasia, under the title of Dagobert II.

A. D. 684.

The very year after his piratical attack on the Irish coast, King Egfrid, by a just judgment upon him, as Bede appears to think, for this wanton aggression on "a harmless nation, which had been always most friendly to the English,"† was, in a rash invasion of the Pictish territory, defeated and slain; and his brother Alfrid, though illegitimate, succeeded to the throne.‡ With the view of seeking restitution, both of the property and the captives, which had been carried away in the marauding expedition under Egfrid, Adamnan, the abbot of Hy, was sent to the court of the new king, whose warm attachment and gratitude to Ireland, as well as his personal friendship for her legate, could not fail to ensure perfect success to the mission; and accordingly we find, in the annals of the year 684, a record of the return of Adamnan, bringing back with him from Northumbria sixty captives.§ This able and learned man was descended from the same royal line with his predecessor, St. Columba, namely, the race of the northern Niais, which, from the first foundation of Hy, furnished, for more than two centuries, almost all its abbots. So constant did the Irish remain to one line of descent, as well in their abbots as their kings.

It was during this or a subsequent visit to his royal friend that Adamnan, observing the practice of the English churches, was induced to adopt the Roman Paschal system; as well as to employ, on his return home, all the influence he possessed, with his countrymen, in persuading them to follow his example. In those parts of Ireland which were exempt from the jurisdiction of Hy, his success appears to have been considerable; but neither in that monastery, nor any of those dependent upon it, could their eminent abbot succeed in winning over converts. Among the writings left by Adamnan, the most generally known is his Life of St. Columba,—a work, of which a fastidious Scotch critic has pronounced, that "it is the most complete piece of such biography that all Europe can boast of, not only at so early a period, but even through the whole Middle Ages."‖

In the annals of the reign of the monarch Finnachtha, which lasted from the year 674 to 693, we meet with one of the few records of civil transactions, which the

* On account of his illegitimacy, Alfrid had been set aside by some of the nobles, and his younger brother Egfrid exalted to the throne. "Is (Alfridus) quia nothus, ut dixi, erat factione optimatum, quamvis senior, regno indignus et æstimatus, in Hiberniam, seu vi, seu indignatione secesserat. Ita ab odio germani tutus, et magno otio literis imbutus, omni philosophia animum composuerat."—*Gulielm. Malmsbur. De Gest. Reg.* lib. i. c. 3.

† Vastavit misere gentem innoxiam et nationi Anglorum semper amicissimam.—Lib. iv. c. 26.

‡ He ably retrieved, too, as Bede informs us, the ruined state of that kingdom. How much this prince had profited by his studies in Ireland, appears from what the same historian states of him, that "he was most learned in the Scriptures"—"vir in scripturis doctissimus."—Lib. iv. c. 26.

§ Annal. IV. Mag. ‖ Pinkerton, Inquiry, &c.

monkish chroniclers have deigned to transmit; nor even in this instance, perhaps, should we have been furnished with any knowledge of the fact, had it not been so closely connected with the ascendency and glory of the church. The Boarian tribute, that iniquitous tax upon the people of Leinster, which had now, through forty successive reigns, been one of the most fertile of all the many sources of national strife, was, at length, at the urgent request of St. Moling, archbishop of Ferns, remitted by the pious King Finnachtha, for himself and his successors, for ever.

Towards the close of this century, we again find the page of Irish history illuminated by a rich store of saintly ornaments. It is highly probable that, on the return of Prince Dagobert to Austrasia, he had been accompanied or followed thither from Ireland by some of those eminent scholars who had, during his stay there, presided over his studies; as we find him, on his subsequent accession to the throne, extending his notice and patronage to two distinguished natives of Ireland, St. Arbogast* and St. Florentius, the former of whom having resided, for some time, in retirement at Alsace, was, by Dagobert, when he became king, appointed bishop of Strasburg; and, on his death, a few years after, his friend and countryman, Florentius, became his successor. The tombs of two brothers, Erard† and Albert, both distinguished Irish saints of this period, were long shown at Ratisbon; and St. Wiro, who is said to have been a native of the county of Clare,‡ rose to such eminence by his sanctity, that Pepin of Heristal, the mighty ruler and father of kings, selected him for his spiritual director, and was accustomed, we are told, to confess to him barefoot.

But one of the most celebrated of the Irish missionaries of this period, was the great apostle of Franconia, St. Kilian, who, to his other triumphs and glories in the cause of religion, added finally that of martyrdom. His illustrious convert, the Duke of Wurtzburg, whose conversion was followed by that of numbers of his subjects, having contracted a marriage with the wife of his brother, St. Kilian pointed out to him the unlawfulness of such a connexion, and required, as a proof of his sense of religion, that he should dissolve it. The Duke, confessing this to be the most difficult of all the trials imposed upon him, yet added that, having already sacrificed so much for the love of God, he would also give up Geilana, notwithstanding that she was so dear to him, as soon as a military expedition, on which he was then summoned, should be at an end. On being informed, after his departure, of what had passed, Geilana determined to take her revenge; and, seizing the opportunity when St. Kilian, accompanied by two of his brethren, was employed in chanting the midnight service, she sent an assassin, with orders to put them all to death. As the saint had exhorted them to receive calmly the wished-for crown of martyrdom, no resistance was made by any of the party, and they were, one by one, quietly beheaded. On the same night, their remains were hastily deposited in the earth, together with their clothes and pontifical ornaments, the sacred books and cross; and were many years after, discovered by St. Burchard, Bishop of Wurtzburg. Of the impious Geilana we are told, that she was seized with an evil spirit, which so grievously tormented her that she soon after died; and, to this day, St. Kilian is honoured as Wurtzburg's patron saint.

To this period it seems most reasonable to refer the patron saint of Tarentum, Cataldus, of whose acts more has been written, and less with certainty known, than of any other of the great ornaments of Irish church history.§ His connexion with the cele-

* Arbogastus, origine Scotus.—*Mabillon.*

† There has been some doubt as to the claims of Ireland to this saint; but Bollandus, after much consideration on the subject, declares it to be the most probable opinion that he was an Irishman. See the point discussed by Dr. Lanigan, chap. xviii. note 95.

‡ "Dr. Lingard says (*Anglo-Saxon Church*, chap. xiii. note 12.) that Alcuin, in the poem *de Pont. Eber.* v. 1045, calls Wiro an Anglo-Saxon. Now, in the said poem, which, by the by, was not written by Alcuin, there is not a word about Wiro at that verse, nor, as far as I can find, in any other part of it."—*Lanigan*, chap. xviii. note 105.

§ See, for a long account of this saint, Usher's *De Brit. Eccles. Primord.* 751. et seq. From a Life of Cataldus, in verse, by Bonaventura Moronus, Usher cites some opening lines, of which the following are a specimen:—

> "Oceani Divum Hesperii Fhœbique cadentis
> Immortale decus, nulli pietate secundum,
> Prisca Phalantsi celebrant quem jura Senatus,
> Externisque dolet mitti glacialis Iberne,
> Musa, refer."

The place of his birth was thus announced, we are told, in song, in the ancient churches of Tarentum:

> "Gaude, felix Hibernia, de qua proles alma progreditur:"

And again, in this rhyming epitaph:

brated school of Lismore, which was not founded till about the year 669, places him, at least, towards the conclusion of the seventh century, if not at the beginning of the eighth; it being evident, from the mention of Lismore, in some of the numerous poems dedicated to his praise, that the fame of that school had, at the time when he flourished, already extended itself to foreign lands.*

In the eighth century, indeed, the high reputation of the Irish for scholarship had become established throughout Europe; and that mode of applying the learning and subtlety of the schools to the illustration of theology, which assumed, at a later period, a more systematic form, under the name of the Scholastic Philosophy, is allowed to have originated among the eminent divines whom the monasteries of Ireland, in the course of this century, poured fourth. Of the dialectical powers of these theologians we are furnished with one remarkable specimen, in a sort of syllogistic argument used by them on the subject of the Trinity, which, however hetrodox may seem its tendency, by no means merits the charge of sophistry brought against it; as it but puts in a short, condensed form, the main difficulty of the doctrine, and marks clearly the two dangerous shoals of Tritheism and Sabellianism, between which the orthodox Trinitarian finds it so difficult to steer.†

As we approach the middle of the eighth century, the literary annals of the country present a much rarer display of eminent native names. But, however thinly scattered, they were the sole or chief lights of their time. Minds, in advance of the age they live in, have always received and deserved a double portion of fame; and there is one distinguished Irishman of this period, whose name, from the darkness in which it shone out, will continue to be remembered when those of far more gifted men will have passed into oblivion.‡ Virgilius whose real name is supposed to have been Fargil, or Feargal,§ appeared first as a missionary abroad, about the year 746, when, arriving in France, he attracted the notice and friendship of Pepin, the father of Charlemagne, and became an inmate of his princely residence near Compiegne, on the Oise. From thence, after a stay of two years, he proceeded to Bavaria, bearing letters of introduction from his able patron to the duke Odilo, then ruler of that duchy. The great English missionary, Boniface,—the Apostle, as he is in general styled, of the Germans,—had been lately appointed to the new archbishopric of Mentz, and a difference of opinion on a point of theology, between him and Virgilius, who had been placed within the jurisdiction of his see, first brought them into collision with each other. Some ignorant priest having been in the habit of using bad Latin in administering baptism, St. Boniface, who chose to consider the ceremony thus performed to be invalid, ordered Virgilius, in some such cases that had occurred, to perform the baptism over again.‖ This the wiser abbot spiritedly refused, maintaining that the want of grammatical knowledge in the minister could not

" Felix Hibernia, sed Magis Tarentum,
Quæ claudis in tumulo magnum talentum."

Usher has amply exposed in this, as in numerous other instances, the impudent pretences on which the notorious Dempster has laid claim to our Irish saints, as natives of Scotland.

* In a passage too long to be given entire, Bonaventura Moronus has described the multitudes of foreign scholars that flocked from every part of Europe to the famous school at Lismore, where Cataldus had been educated:

" Undique conveniunt proceres, quos dulce trahebat
Discendi studium, major, num cognito virtus,
An laudata foret. . . . . .
Certatim hi properant diverso tramite ad urbem
Lesmoriam, juvenis primos ubi transigit annos."

† " Apud modernos scholasticos maxime apud Scotos est syllogismus delusionis, ut dicunt, Trinitatem, sicut personarum, ita esse substantiarum."—*Letter of Benedict*, Abbot of Aniane, quoted by Mosheim, vol. ii. cent. viii. chap. 3. The object of the syllogism of those Irish scholastics is thus described by Benedict:—" Quatenus si adenserit illectus auditor, Trinitatem esse trium substantiarum Deum, trium derogetur cultor Deorum: si autem abnuerit, personarum denegatur culpetur:" that is, as explained by Mosheim, " You must either affirm or deny that the three Persons in the Deity are three substances: if you affirm it, you are undoubtedly a Tritheist, and worship three Gods; if you deny it, this denial implies that they are not three distinct persons, and thus you fall into Sabellianism."

‡ " Avant tous ces savants hommes, on avoit admiré en la personne de Virgile, Evêque de Saltzbourg et Apôtre de la Carinthie, de grandes connoissances, tant sur la Philosophie que sur la Théologie. Il est le premier que l'on sache qui ait découvert les Antipodes, ou l'autre monde."—*Hist. Litt. de la France*, tom. iv.

§ " The Irish *Fear*, sometimes contracted into *Fer*, has, in latinizing of names, been not seldom changed into *Vir*. For *Fear*, in Irish, signifies man as *Vir* does in Latin. Thus an abbot of Hy, whose name is constantly written in Irish *Fergna*, is called by Adamnan *Virgnous*, through, as Colgan observes, a Latin inflection."—*Lanigan*, chap xix. note 127.

‖ In performing the ceremony of baptism, this priest used to say, " Baptize te in nomine *Patria et Filia et Spiritus Sancta*, instead of " Patris, Filii, et Spiritus Sancti."—*Epist. Zachar. Pat. Ep. Hibern. Sylloge.*

invalidate the efficacy of the ordinance. Confident, too, in the correctness of his opinion, he laid all the circumstances of the case before Pope Zachary, who immediately wrote to reprove the archbishop for the order which he had issued, and thus virtually gave his sanction to the opposition of Virgilius.

This triumph over him by an inferior seems to have rankled in the mind of Boniface, who from thenceforth sought opportunities of denouncing Virgilius to the pope, as guilty of various errors on points of catholic doctrine. Among these charges, the most serious, as may be concluded from the excitement which it produced, was that which accused the Irish abbot of maintaining that there "was another world, and other men, under the earth."* The fact was, that the acute mind of Virgilius had, from the knowledge acquired by him in the Irish schools, where geographical and philosophical studies were more cultivated than in other parts of the West, come to the conclusion that the earth was of a spherical figure, and that, by a necessary consequence, there were antipodes. This, as it proved upon inquiry, was the scientific doctrine which had been represented ignorantly to the pope, as a belief in another world below the earth, distinct from ours, inhabited by men, not of the race of Adam, nor included among those for whom Christ died.† It is by no means wonderful that, on such a representation, as well of the opinion as of the deductions from it, Pope Zachary should regard it as an alarming heresy, and write, in answer to the archbishop, that, "should the charge be proved, a council must be convened, and the offender expelled from the church." As no record exists of any farther proceedings upon the subject, we may take for granted that the accused abbot found means of clearing himself from the aspersion;‡ and so little did this memorable charge of heresy stand in the way of his preferment, earthly or heavenly, that in a few years after he was made bishop of Saltzburg, and in A. D. 1233, we find him canonized by Pope Gregory IX.

Such are the real particulars of a transaction which it has been the object of many writers to misrepresent, for the purpose of flippantly accusing the church of Rome of a deliberate design to extinguish the light of science, and obstruct the progress of truth.§ Were it even certain that this pope was slow to believe in the existence of antipodes, he would, at least, have erred in good company; as already the poet Lucretius had pronounced this belief to be inconsistent with reason;‖ while no less a church authority than St. Augustine had denounced it as contrary to the Scriptures.¶ But there is every reason to suppose, that Pope Zachary, on the doctrine of Virgilius being explained to him, saw that it was an opinion to be at least tolerated, if not believed; and so far was the propounder of it from being, as is commonly stated, punished by losing his bishopric,** that it appears, on the contrary, to have been shortly after his promulgation of this doctrine that he was raised to the see of Saltzburg.

The life of this learned and active man, after his elevation to the see of Saltzburg, was marked by a succession of useful public acts; and the great Basilic, raised by him in honour of St. Rupert, attested at once the piety and magnificence of his nature. But the most lasting service rendered by him to the cause of religion, was the zealous part which he took in propagating the Gospel among the Carinthians. Two young princes of the reigning family of that province having been, at his request, baptized and educated as Christians, he found himself enabled, through their means, when they afterwards succeeded to power, so far to extend and establish the church already planted in their dominions, as fully to justify his claim to the title of the Apostle of Carinthia.

Under the auspices of the munificent Charlemagne, that country on whose shores the missionary and the scholar had never failed to meet with welcome and fame, had become a still more tempting asylum for the student and the exile; and among the learned of other lands who enjoyed that prince's patronage, those from Ireland were

* "Quod alius mundus et alii homines sub terrâ sint, seu alius sol et luna."—*Bonifac. Epist. Bibliothec. Patrum.*

† The argument of Boniface was, that "Si essent antipodes, alii homines adeoque alius Christus introducerentur."

‡ "Disceptationis exitum non comperio. Fit verisimile aut purgasse se Virgilium Pontifici, sive coram, sive per litteras: aut, cognitis invidorum utriusque fraudibus . . . . . ultro, quod inter bonos solet, in gratiam esse reditum."—*Valesr. Rerum Boicarum*, lib. v.

§ Among others, D'Alembert has founded on this supposed persecution of the Irish scholar, whom he honours so far as to connect his name with Galileo's, some strong charges against the tribunal of Rome, which, he says, "condamna un célèbre astronome pour avoir soutenu le mouvement de la terre, et le déclara hérétique; à-peu-près comme le pape Zacharie avoit condamné, quelques siècles auparavant, un Evêque, pour n'avoir pas pensé comme Saint Augustin sur les Antipodes, et pour avoir deviné leur existence six cens ans avant que Cristophe Columbe les découvrit."—*Discours Prélim. de l'Encyclopédie.*

‖ Lib. i. 1064. ¶ De Civitat. Dei. lib. xvi. c. 9.

** Thus, Dr. Campbell, one of the most pretending and superficial of the writers on Irish affairs, speaks of "this great man as sentenced to degradation, upon his conviction of being a *Mathematician*, by Pope Zachary, in the eighth century."—*Strictures on the Ecclesiast. and Lit. Hist. of Ireland.*

not the least conspicuous or deserving. The strange circumstances under which two itinerant Irish scholars, named Clement and Albinus, contrived to attract the emperor's notice, are thus related by a monkish chronicler of the time.* Arriving, in company with some British merchants, on the shores of France, these two Scots of Ireland, as they are designated by the chronicler, observing that the crowds who flocked around them on their arrival were eager only for saleable articles, could think of no other mode of drawing attention to themselves, than by crying out "Who wants wisdom? let him come to us, for we have it to sell." By continually repeating this cry, they soon succeeded in becoming objects of remark; and, as they were found, upon nearer inquiry, to be no ordinary men, an account of them was forthwith transmitted to Charlemagne, who gave orders that they should be conducted into his presence. Their scheme or whim, whichsoever it might have been, was at once crowned with success; as the king, finding their pretensions to wisdom (as all the learning of that time was by courtesy called,) to be not without foundation, placed Clement at the head of a seminary which he then established in France, and sent Albinus to preside over a similar institution at Pavia.† The historian Denina, remarking the fallen state of Italy at this period, when she was compelled, as he says, to look to the North and the extreme West for instructors, adds, as a striking proof of her reduced condition, that Irish monks were placed by Charlemagne at the head of some of her schools.‡

Some doubts have been started as to the truth of this characteristic adventure of the two Irish scholars.§ But, in addition to the evidence on which the story rests, and which is the same relied upon for most of the early life of Charlemagne, the incident is marked throughout with features so truly Irish—the dramatic humour of the expedient, the profession itself of an itenerant scholar, to a late period common in Ireland,—that there appear but slight grounds for doubting the authenticity of the anecdote. The vehement denial of its truth by Tiraboschi is actuated too evidently by offended national vanity, at the thought of an Irishman having been chosen to preside over a place of education in Italy, to be received with the deference his authority might otherwise command; and both Muratori and Denina have given their sanction to the main fact of the narrative.

In the latter part of this century we find another native of Ireland, named Dungal, trying his fortune, with far more valid claims to distinction, in France, and honoured in like manner with the patronage of her imperial chief. Of the letter addressed by this learned Scot‖ to Charlemange, on the two solar eclipses alleged to have been observed in Europe in the year 810, I have already had occasion to speak; and, however superficial the astronomical knowledge displayed in this short tract, the writer has proved himself to have been well acquainted with all that the ancients had said upon the subject;¶ while both in his admission that two** solar eclipses might take place within the year, and his doubt that such a rare incident had occurred in 810, he is equally correct. The very circumstance, indeed, of its having been selected by Charlemange, though living a recluse, at that time, in the monastery of St. Denis, as one of the few European scholars worthy of being consulted on such a point, shows sufficiently the high estimation in which he was then held.

* Monach. Sangall. de Gest. Carol.

† "On compte encore (say the Benedictines) entre les co-opérateurs de Charlemagne dans l'exécution de son grand dessein, un certain Clement, Hibernois de nation."—Tom. iv.

‡ "Ma ben maggior maraviglia ci dovrà parere, che l'Italia non solamente allora abbia dovuto riconoscere da' barbari boreali il rinnovamento della milizia, ma abbia da loro dovuto apprendere in quello stesso tempo le scienze più necessarie; e che bisognasse dagli ultimi confini d'occidente et del nord far venire in Italia i maestri ad insegnarci, non che altro, la lingua latina. Carlo Magno nel 781 avea preposto alle scuole d' Italia e di Francia due Monachi Irlandesi."—*Delle Rivoluzioni d' Italia*, lib. viii. cap. 12.

§ After mentioning that one of these Irishmen, Clement, had been detained in France by Charlemagne, Tiraboschi adds, "L'altro fù da lui mandato in Italia, e gli fù assignato il monastero di S. Agostino presso Pavia, ... acciochè chiunque fosse bramoso, potesse esser da lui istruito. Ecco il gran racconto del Monaco di S. Gallo, su cui è fondata l'accennata commune opinione. Ancorchè esso si ammettesse per vero, altro finalmente non potremmo raccogliene, se non che uno Scozzese fu mandato da Carlo Magno a Pavia, per tenervi scuola; ne ciò basterebbe a provare, che vi fosse tale scarsezza d'uomini dotti in Italia, che convenisse inviarvi stranieri."—*Storia della Letterat. Italian.*, tom. iii lib. 3. cap. 1.

‖ Having stated that Mabillon supposed Dungal to be an Irishman, the authors of the Hist. Littéraire de la France say, "Ce qui paroit appuyé tant sur son nom que sur ce que l'Hibernie fournit alors plusieurs autres grands hommes à la France."

¶ Dacher. Spicileg. tom. iii. The following remarks on Dungal's letter are from the pen of Ismael Bullialdus, "astronomus profundæ indaginis," as Ricciolus styles him, whom D'Achery had consulted on the subject:—"Non est enim possibile ut in locis ab æquinoctiali linea paulo remotioribus, intra semestre spatium binæ eclipses solis cernantur, quod sub lineâ æquinoctiali, vel in locis subjacentibus parallelis ab eâ non longè descriptis accidere potest: intra vero quinquemestre spatium in eodem hemisphærio boreali vel australino binæ eclipses solares conspici queunt, quæ omnia demonstrari possunt utpote vera. Sed hujus Epistolæ Auctor Dungalus has differentias ignorasse videtur."

** In Struyk's Catalogue of Eclipses there occur, I think, four instances of a solar eclipse having been observed twice within the space of a year, viz. A. D. 237-8, 812-3, 1185-6, and 1408-9.

We find him some time after in Italy, acting as master of the great public school established at Pavia by Lothaire I.; with jurisdiction, too, over all the other subordinate schools which this prince founded in the different cities of Italy.* How high was the station assigned to the Irish Professor, may be judged from a Capitular,† issued by Lothaire, in which, while the various cities where schools had been founded are enumerated, the name of Dungal alone of all the different professors is mentioned, and every institution is placed in subordination to that of Pavia.

A work written by this eminent man about the year 827, in answer to an attack made by Claudius, Bishop of Turin, on the Catholic practice of honouring images and paying reverence to saints, is praised by a distinguished Italian writer, as displaying not merely a fund of sacred learning, but also a knowledge of polite literature, and of the classical graces of style.‡ In opposition to Claudius, who, reviving the heresy of Vigilantius, maintained that saints ought not to be honoured, nor any reverence paid to images, the Irish Doctor contends zealously for the ancient Catholic practice, and, instead of resorting to the aid of argument on a point solely to be decided by authority and tradition, appeals to the constant practice of the church from the very earliest times, which has been, he says, to revere, with the honour suitable to them, the figure of the cross, and the pictures and relics of saints, without either sacrificing to them or offering them the worship which is due to God alone. In honour of his countryman St. Columbanus, Dungal bequeathed to the monastery of Bobbio a valuable collection of books, the greater part of which are now at Milan, having been removed to the Ambrosian Library by Cardinal Frederic Borromeo.§

We have now arrived at a crisis in the history of Ireland, when it was her destiny to undergo a great and disastrous change; when that long seclusion from the rest of the world, comprising a period commensurate with the whole of her authentic history, which, with a few doubtful exceptions, had kept her verdant fields untouched by the foot of an invader, was at length fiercely broken in upon; and a series of invasions, from the north of Europe, began to be inflicted upon her people, which checked the course of their civilization, kept the whole island for more than three centuries in a continued state of confusion and alarm, and by dividing, even more than by wasting, the internal strength of the kingdom, prepared the way for its final and utter subjugation by the English. Before we plunge, however, into the dark and revolting details of this period, which, marked as they are with the worst excesses of foreign aggression, are yet more deeply disgraced by the stain of domestic treachery and strife, it may not be amiss to infringe so far on the order of historical synchronism, as to complete the rapid review we have here commenced of the many peaceful triumphs achieved by Irish genius during this century, as well at home as in foreign countries, leaving the warfare and political transactions of the same interval to be treated separately afterwards.

It should have been mentioned in the account of our celebrated scholar Virgilius, that in leaving Ireland he is said to have been accompanied by a Greek bishop, named Dubda; a circumstance which, coupled with the fact stated by Usher of there having been a Greek church at Trim, in the county of Meath,‖ which was so called even to his time, proves that the fame of the schools and churches of Ireland had attracted thither several Greek ecclesiastics; and accounts for so many of her own native scholars, such as St. Columbanus, Cummian, and, as we shall presently see, John Erigena, having been so perfectly masters of the Greek language. One of the chief arguments, indeed, employed by Ledwich, in his attempt to show that the early church of Ireland was independent of

* According to Denina, not merely the management of these schools, but the credit of founding them also, is to be attributed to Dungal:—"Fù nell 827 fatto venire di Scozia un monaco per nome Dungalo, famoso in quell' età pel suo sapere. Ebbe costui a reggere in particolare lo studio di Pavia, ma fù nello stesso tempo autore e quasi fondatore delle altre scuole d'Ivrea, di Torino, di Fermo, di Verona, di Vicenza, di Cividal del Friuli, alle quale dovevano concorrere ripartitamente gli scolari da tutte le altre città del regno Italico, siccome ordinò Lottario in suo famoso capitolare."—Lib. viii. cap 12.

† This Capitular, as given by Tiraboschi, thus commences:—"Primum in Papia conveniant ad Dungallum, de Mediolano, de Laude, de Bergamo, de Novaria," &c. &c.—Tom. iii. lib. 3. cap 1. Tiraboschi adds, "Chi fossero à Professori nelle altre città, non ce n'è rimasta memoria. Solo quel di Pavia si nomina in questa legge, cioè Dungalo."—Ib.

‡ "Cæterum liber ille Dungali hominem eruditum sacrisque etiam literis ornatum prodit, at simul in grammaticali foro ac Prisciani deliciis enutrium."—*Muratori.*

§ A catalogue of the books belonging to the library at Bobbio, together with the names of the respective donors, has been preserved by Muratori (Antiq. Ital. vol. viii. Dissert. 43.,) and, in this document, supposed to be written in the 10th century, the name of Dungal is thus mentioned:—"Item, de libris quos Dungalus præcipuus Scotorum obtulit beatissimo Columbano;" meaning, to the monastery founded by Columbanus.

‖ Pontificem secum habuit proprium Dobdan nomine, Græcum, qui ipsum secutus erat ex patria ..... Mirarer vero ex Hibernià nostrà hominem Græcum prodiisse, nisi scirem in agro Midensi apud Trimmenses eidem sacram extitisse, quæ Græcæ Ecclesiæ nomen ad hunc usque diem retinet.—*Epist. Hibern. Syllege*, note xvi.

the See of Rome, is founded on those traces of connexion, through Greek and Asiatic missionaries, with the East, which, there is no doubt, are to be found in the records and transactions of that period. Had such instances, however, been even numerous enough to prove more than a casual and occasional intercourse with those regions, it would not have served the purpose this reverend antiquary sought to gain: as, at the time when Christianity was first introduced into Ireland, the heads of the Greek church were on the best terms with the See of Rome; Asiatics and Greeks, during the very period to which he alludes, were raised to the chair of St. Peter; and it was not till many centuries after, that the schism of the Greeks divided the Christian world.

In addition to the evidence of their merits furnished by recorded acts of the Irish missionaries themselves, it is but just to mention also some of those tributes of admiration, which their active piety and learning drew from their contemporaries. A curious letter addressed by the Saxon scholar Aldhelm,* to his countryman Eahfrid, who had just returned from a long course of study in Ireland, though meant, in its inflated style of irony, to throw ridicule on the Irish schools, is rendered, by the jealousy which it so involuntarily betrays, far more flattering than the most prepense panegyric;—"Why should Ireland," says the writer, "whither troops of students are daily transported, boast of such unspeakable excellence, as if in the rich soil of England, Greek and Roman masters were not to be had to unlock the treasures of divine knowledge.† Though Ireland, rich and blooming in scholars, is adorned like the poles of the world with innumerable bright stars, it is Britain has her radiant sun, her sovereign Pontiff Theodore, nurtured from the earliest age in the school of philosophy: it is she possesses Adrian his companion, graced with every virtue . . . This is that Theodore who, though he should be surrounded by a circle of Hibernian scholars, as a boar in the midst of snarling dogs, yet as soon as he bares his grammatical tooth, puts quickly to flight the rebel phalanx."‡

The tributes of Bede to the piety, learning, and benevolence of the Irish clergy, have been frequently adverted to in these pages; and while justice was thus liberally rendered to them by the English, we find a French author of the ninth century, Eric of Auxerre, equally zealous in their praise. "What shall I say," he exclaims, "of Ireland, who, despising the dangers of the deep, is migrating, with almost her whole train of philosophers, to our coasts."§

Among the names that, early in the ninth century, adorn this list of distinguished Irishmen, are those of Sedulius and Donatus, the former the author, it is supposed, of the Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul. From the many Irish scholars of this name that arose at different periods into reputation, considerable difficulty has been found in distinguishing their respective times and writings.‖ But it appears pretty certain, though both were natives of Ireland, that the author of the poems mentioned in a preceding part of this work is to be considered as a distinct person from the commentator on St. Paul. In the subject and origin of one of the writings ascribed to the later Sedulius,¶ may be found a proof of the constant prevalence among his countrymen of that tradition respecting their origin from Spain, to which I have had occasion, at the commencement of this volume, to advert. On account of the reputation he had acquired by his commentaries on St. Paul, this abbot was despatched by the pope, with the dignity of Bishop of Oreto, to Spain, for the purpose of reconciling some differences of opinion that had arisen among the clergy of that country. The Spaniards, objecting to the appearance of a stranger in such a capacity, made some difficulty as to receiving him; on which Sedulius, it is said, drew up his treatise entitled "the concordance of Spain and Hibernia," in which, refer-

* The instructor of Aldhelm was Maidulph, an Irishman; though Mr. Turner (unintentionally, as I am willing to think) suppresses the fact, merely saying that Aldhelm had "continued his studies at Malmsbury, where Maidulf, an Irishman, had founded a monastery."—Vol. ii. Aldhelm himself became afterwards abbot of the monastery.

† "Cur, inquam, Hibernia, quò catervatim istinc lectores classibus advecti confluunt, ineffabili quodam privilegio efferatur: ac si istic, fœcundo Britanniæ in cespite, didascali Argivi Romanive Quirites reperiri minimè queant, qui cœlestis tetrica enodantes bibliothecæ problemata sciolis reserare se sciscitantibus valeant. Quamvis enim prædictum Hiberniæ rus, discentium opulans vernansque (ut ita dixerim) pascuosâ numerositate lectorum, quemadmodum poli cardines astriferis micantium ornentur vibraminibus side rum; ast tamen," &c. &c.—*Epist. Hibern. Sylloge.*

‡ "Etiamsi beatæ memoriæ Theodorus summi sacerdotii gubernacula regens, Hibernensium globo discipulorum (ceu aper truculentus molossorum catastâ ringente vallatus) stipetur; limato perniciter Grammatico dente," &c. &c.—*Ib.*

§ "Quid Hiberniam memorem, contempto pelagi discrimine, pene tota cum grege philosophorum ad littora nostra migrantem."—*Ad Carol. Calv.*

‖ See, for the various authorities on this subject, the Ecclesiar. Primord. 769., where the result of the mass of evidence so laboriously brought together seems to be, that the commentator and the poet were decidedly distinct persons.

¶ Thus mentioned by Hepidanus, the Monk of St. Gall, under the year 818:—"Sedulius Scottus clarus habetur."

ring, no doubt, to the traditions of both countries, he asserted the claims of the Irish to be considered as Spaniards, and to enjoy all the privileges of the Spanish nation.*

At the same period another accomplished Irishman, Donatus, having gone on a pilgrimage to Rome, was induced to fix himself in Italy, and became soon after Bishop of Fiesole. That he left some writings behind him, political as well as theological, may be collected from the epitaph on his tomb, composed by himself.† But of these productions the only remains that have reached us are some not inelegant verses, warmly in praise of his native land.‡

But the most remarkable man that Ireland, or perhaps, any other country, sent forth, in those ages, was the learned and subtle John Scotus; whose distinctive title of Erigena, or, as it was sometimes written, Eringena, points so clearly to the land of his birth, that, among the numbers who have treated of his life and writings, but a very few have ventured to contest this point. At what period he removed from Ireland to France cannot be very accurately ascertained; but it is conjectured to have been about the year 845, when he had already reached the age of manhood, and was doubtless furnished with all the learning of his native schools; and such was the success, as well of his social as of his intellectual powers, that Charles the Bald, King of France, not only extended to him his patronage, but made him the companion of his most secluded and familiar hours.

For the early travels of this scholar to Greece and into the East, there appears to be no other foundation than a wish to account for his extraordinary knowledge of the Greek and other languages, as well as for that acquaintance with the mystic theology of the Alexandrian school, which he derived, in reality, from his study of the writings ascribed to Dyonysius the Areopagite. A copy of these treatises had been sent as a present to Louis I., by Michael Balbus, the Greek Emperor; and as additional reverence was attached, in France, to their contents, from the notion that Dionysius, the supposed author, was the same as St. Denys, the first Bishop of Paris, Charles the Bald, with a view of rendering the work accessible to such readers as himself, who were acquainted with Greek, appointed Erigena to the task of translating it into Latin.

The change effected in the theology of Europe by this book, as well as by the principles deduced from it afterwards in the translator's own writings, continued to be felt through a very long period. Previously to this time, the scholastic mode of considering religious questions had prevailed generally among the theologians of Europe;§ but the introduction to the mystic doctrines of Alexandria, by John Scotus, infused a new

* Harris on Ware's Writers, art. Sedulius.

† "Gratuita discipulis dictabam scripta libellis
Schemata metrorum, dicta beata senum."

‡ "Finibus occiduis describitur optima tellus
Nomine et antiquis Scotia dicta libris.
Insula dives opum, gemmarum, vestis et auri:
Commoda corporibus, aere, sole, solo.
Melle fluit pulchris et lacteis Scotia campis,
Vestibus atque armis, frugibus, arte, viris," &c. &c.

The translation of these verses given in O'Halloran's History, was one of the earliest pieces of poetry with which in my youth I was familiar; and it is purely in the indulgence of old recollections that I here venture to cite a few of the lines:—

"Far westward lies an isle of ancient fame,
By nature blest'd, and Scotia is her name,
Enroll'd in books—exhaustless is her store
Of veiny silver and of golden ore.
Her fruitful soil for ever teems with wealth,
With gems her waters, and her air with health;
Her verdant fields with milk and honey flow,
Her woolly fleeces vie with virgin snow.
Her waving furrows float with bearded corn,
And arts and arms her envied sons adorn."

§ By Brucker (tom. iii. De Scholasticis) the commencement of the scholastic theology is brought down so late as to the twelfth century; but it is plain from his own history that this form of theology had a much earlier origin; and by Mosheim the credit of first introducing it is attributed to the Irish of the eighth century.

"That the Hibernians," he says, "who were called Scots in this century, were lovers of learning, and distinguished themselves in these times of ignorance by the culture of the sciences beyond all the other European nations, travelling through the most distant lands, both with a view to improve and to communicate their knowledge, is a fact with which I have been long acquainted; as we see them, in the most authentic records of antiquity, discharging, with the highest reputation and applause, the function of doctor in France, Germany, and Italy, both during this and the following century. But that these Hibernians were the first teachers of the scholastic theology in Europe, and so early as the eighth century illustrated the doctrines of religion by the principles of philosophy, I learned but lately from the testimony of Benedict, Abbot of Aniane, in the province of Languedoc." He then produces his proofs, to which I refer the reader, (Cent. viii. part ii. chap. 2,) and adds:—"From hence it appears, that the philosophical or scholastic theology among the Latins is of more ancient date than is commonly imagined."

element into the theology of the West;* and the keen struggle which then commenced between those opposing principles has formed a considerable part of the history of religious controvesy down to the present day. It is not a little singular, too, that while, as an eminent church historian allegos, "the Hibernians were the first teachers of scholastic theology in Europe," so an Hibernian, himself unrivalled among the dialecticians of his day, should have been also the first to introduce into the arena the antagonist principle of mysticism.

The want of that self-restraint acquired in a course of training for holy orders,—for, by a rare fate in those days, Erigena was both a scholar and a layman,—is observable in the daring lengths to which his speculations respecting the nature of God are carried; speculations bordering, it must be owned, closely on the confines of Spinozism or Pantheism. Thus, "the soul," he says, "will finally pass into the primordial causes of all things, and these causes into God; so that, as before the existence of the world there was nothing but God and the causes of all things in God, so there will be, after its end, nothing else than God and the causes of all things in God." With the same Pantheistic view, he asserts that "all things are God, and God all things,—that God is the maker of all things, and made in all." It is plain that this universal deification is but another form of universal materialism; and the self-satisfaction, and even triumph, with which so good and pious a man—for such Erigena is allowed universally to have been—could come to such desolating conclusions, was but the result of that dangerous principle of identifying religion with philosophy, for which he has been so lauded by one of the most eminent of the modern apostles of rationalism.†

The notions just cited are promulgated in his Treatise on the Division of Nature, or the Nature of Things; and though in that work, which was written subsequently to his translation of Dionysius, there is to be found, in its fullest force, the intoxicating influence of the fountain at which he had been drinking, it is manifest that, even before he had become the interpreter of the dreams of others, his mind had already been stored, by the study of the Platonic writers, with visionary notions of its own; as, in the share taken by him in the famous controversy with the monk Gotescalc, on the subject of predestination, he had, in the midst of those dialectic subtleties in which his chief strength and enjoyment lay, exhibited the same daringness of research into the mysteries of the Divine nature, which characterizes those later flights of his genius to which I have adverted.‡ Combating the doctrine of Gotescalc, who maintained, in accordance with the views of St. Augustine, and, afterwards, of Calvin, that the decrees of God had, from all eternity, preordained some men to everlasting life, and others to everlasting punishment and misery, Erigena denied that there was any predestination of the damned; contending that the prescience of God extended only to the election of the blessed; since he could not foresee that of which he was not the author, and, being the source neither of sin nor evil, could not foreknow or predestinate them. In truth, identifying, as he did, all things with God, it was not possible for him to admit of permanent pain or evil in the system, without making that Being a sharer in them. Hence his doctrine, that the punishment of the damned, and even the wickedness of the devils themselves, will, some time or other, cease, and the blessed and the unblessed dwell in a state of endless happiness, differing only in degree.

While thus, in his notion of the final redemption even of the demons and the damned,

* "Illos enim Latinis auribus accommodando chaos simul Alexandrinum, quod plerosque hactenus in Occidente latuerat, notum fecit, ansamque dedit ut cum theologia scholastica, mystica quoque extolleret, rationi sanæ et philosophiæ non minus inimica quam illa ut supra dictum."—*Brucker. De Philosoph. Christianor. Occident.* "And thus," adds Brucker, "that philosophic enthusiasm, which the Oriental philosophy brought forth and Platonism nursed, which Egypt educated, Asia nurtured, and the Greek church adopted, was introduced, under the pretext and authority of a great apostolic name, into the Western churches, and there gave rise to innumerable mischiefs."

† "Remarquez qu'ils sont tous ecclésiastiques et leur philosophie est toute religieuse et tote chrétienne. C'est là leur commun caractère; ils no font tous, sous ce rapport, que commenter, cette belle phrase de Scot Erigène, 'il n'y a pas deux études, l'une de la philosophie, l'autre de la religion; la vraie philosophie est la vraie religion, et la vraie religion est la vraie philosophie.'"—*Victor Cousin, Cours de Philosophie*, tom. i. leçon 9.

The original passage, here referred to, is as follows:—"Quid est aliud de philosophia tractare, nisi vera religionis, qua summa et principalis omnium rerum causa Deus, et humiliter colitur et rationabiliter investigatur, regulas exponere? Conficitur inde veram esse philosophiam veram religionem, conversimque veram religionem esse veram philosophiam."—*De Prædestinatione.*

‡ "Scott Erigène avait puisé dans son commerce (avec les écrits da Dènis l'Aréopagite) une foule d'idées Alexandrines qu'il a développées dans ses deux ouvrages originaux, l'un sur la Prédestination et la Grace, l'autre sur la Division de Etres. Ces idées, par leur analogie avec celles de S. Augustin, entrèrent facilement dans la circulation, et grossèrent le trésor de la scholastique."—*Cousin*, ut supra.

It will be seen that the mistake into which the learned professor has here fallen, can only be accounted for by his not having made himself acquainted with the works of which he speaks; as it is not possible for two systems to have less analogy with each other than those of St. Augustine and John Erigena upon the subject of predestination.

he revived one of the heresies of Origen, his assertion of the power of the human will, and his denial of the corruption of human nature, betrayed a coincidence between his creed and that of the heretic Pelagius, which he in vain endeavoured, by logical subtleties, to disguise. He had, in fact, gathered from almost every heresy some materials for his philosophy, and his philosophy, in turn, lent vigour and animation to effete heresy.

Besides the labours of this ingenious man which I have here mentioned, he entered likewise into the controversy raised, at this period, respecting the manner in which the body and blood of Christ are present in the sacrament. The treatise written by him upon the subject no longer exists; but the general opinion is, that he denied the Real Presence; and the natural bent of his mind to run counter to prevailing and sanctioned opinions, renders it most probable that such was his view of this now, for the first time, controverted mystery. In stating, however, as he is said to have done, that the sacrament of the Eucharist is not the "true body and true blood," he might have had reference solely to the doctrine put forth then recently by Paschasius Radbert, who maintained that the body present in the Eucharist was the same carnal and palpable body which was born of the Virgin, which suffered on the cross, and rose from the dead; whereas, the belief of the Catholic church, on this point of doctrine, has always been, that the body of Christ is under the symbols, not corporeally or carnally, but in a spiritual manner.*

The stories introduced into the general accounts of John Erigena, of his removing to England on the death of his patron, Charles the Bald, and acquiring a new Mæcenas in the person of Alfred, the great English king, are all manifestly fables; arising out of a confusion, of which William of Malmesbury and others availed themselves, between our Irish John—who, it is evident, remained in France till he died,—and a monk from Saxony, much patronized by Alfred, called John of Atheling.† At what period Erigena died is not clearly ascertained; but it is concluded that his death must have occurred before the year 875, as a letter written in that year by Anastasius, the Bibliothecarian, speaks of him in the past tense, as if then dead.‡

The space devoted here to the account of this extraordinary person will hardly, I think, be deemed more than it deserves; since, in addition to the honour derived to his country from the immense European reputation which he acquired, he appears to have been, in the whole assemblage of his qualities, intellectual and social, a perfect representative of the genuine Irish character, in all its various and versatile combinations. Combining humour and imagination with powers of shrewd and deep reasoning,—the sparkle upon the surface as well as the mine beneath,—he yet lavished both these gifts imprudently, exhibiting on all subjects almost every power but that of discretion. His life, in its social relations, seems to have been marked by the same characteristic anomalies; for while the simplicity of his mind and manner, and the festive play of his wit, endeared him to private friends, the daring heterodoxy of his written opinions alarmed and alienated the public, and rendered him at least as much feared as admired.

Another Irish philosopher, named Macarius, who flourished in France about this period, is supposed by some writers to have preceded the time of Erigena, but, more probably, was either his contemporary, or came soon after him, as the doctrine promulgated in a

* Thus explained, in perfect consonance, as he says, with the doctrine of the Council of Trent, by the celebrated missionary, Veron:—"Ergo, corpus Christi, seu Christus, est in symbolis spirituali modo seu spiritualiter et non corporali seu carnali, nec corporaliter seu carnaliter."—*Regula. Fid. Cathol.* c. ii. sect. 11.

† The antiquary Leland, though following the popular error in numbering John Scotus among those learned men who adorned the court of Alfred, yet expressly distinguishes him from that Saxon monk with whom Mr. Turner, among others, has strangely confounded him:—"Joannem monachum et Saxonia transmarina oriundum, Joannem Scotum qui Dionysii hierarchiam interpretatus est, viros extra quæstionem doctissimos, in pretio et familiaritate habuit."—*Leland. Commentar.* cap. 115.

‡ This long and curious letter may be found in Usher's Sylloge. "It is wonderful," says the Bibliothecarian, "how that barbarous man (who, placed at the extremity of the world, might, in proportion as he was remote from the rest of mankind, be supposed to be unacquainted with other languages,) was able to comprehend such deep things, and to render them in another tongue. I mean John Scotigena, whom I have heard spoken of as a holy man in every respect."

§ I cannot resist the desire of adding to the other notices of this Irish scholar the following, from an eminent German writer:—"On place dans un ordre beaucoup plus élevé Jean Scot, né en Irelande, (de là son surnom d'Erigène) homme fort lettré, esprit philosophique et indépendant, dont on ignore quelles furent les resources pour atteindre à cette supériorité . . . . . On peut regarder comme des phénomènes singuliers pour son siècle ses connaissances en latin et en grec (quelques-uns y joignent la langue arabe) son amour pour la philosophie d'Aristote, sa traduction, si précieuse en Occident, de Dénys l'Aréopagite, ses opinions franches et éclairées dans les disputes de son temps sur la prédestination et l'eucharistie, sa manière de considérer la philosophie comme la science des principes de toute chose, science qui ne peut être distinguée de la religion, et son système philosophique renouvelé du néoplatonisme, où domine ce principe,—Dieu est la substance de toutes choses, elles découlent de la plénitude de son être, et retournent enfin à lui. Tous ces résultats si extraordinaires d'études laborieuses, et d'une pensée forte et originale, eussent pu faire plus de bien, si leur influence n'eût été arrêtée par les proscriptions de l'orthodoxie."—*Tennemann, Manuel de l'Hist. de la Phil.*

treatise ascribed to his pen, that "there is but one soul in all mankind," had clearly its origin in the emanative system of that mystic school of philosophy with which the translator of the pseudo-Dionysius had, for the first time, made the Western Church acquainted.

CHAPTER XIV.

STATE OF LEARNING AND THE ARTS IN IRELAND DURING THE SAME PERIOD.

In a preceding chapter of this volume there has been submitted to the reader most of the evidence, as well incidental as direct, suggested by various writers, in support of the belief, that the use of letters was known to the pagan Irish. But, perhaps, one of the most convincing proofs, that they were at least acquainted with this gift before the time when St. Patrick introduced among them the Christian doctrine, is to be found in the immediate display of mind and talent which the impulse of that great event produced,—in the rapidity with which they at once started forth as scholars and missionaries, and became, as we have seen, the instructors of all Europe, at a time when, according to some, they were but rude learners themselves. It is, indeed, far easier to believe—what there is besides such strong evidence to prove—that the elements of learning were already known to them when St. Patrick and his brother missionaries arrived, than that the seeds then for the first time sown should have burst forth in so rich and sudden a harvest.

To the question,—Where, then, are any of the writings of those pagan times? where the tablets, the manuscripts, even pretending to be of so ancient a date?—it can only be answered, that the argument involved in this question would apply with equal force to the two or three centuries succeeding the time of St. Patrick, when, as all know, not merely letters, but the precious fruits of those elements, literature and the sciences, had begun to spring up in Ireland. And yet, of that long and comparatively shining period, when the schools of this country attracted the attention of all Europe; when the accomplished Cummian drew from thence his stores of erudition, and Columba's biographer acquired in them his Latin style; when Columbanus carried to Gaul, from the celebrated school of Banchor, that knowledge of Greek and Hebrew which he afterwards displayed in his writings, and the acute Virgilius went forth, enriched with the various science which led him to anticipate the discovery of the sphericity of the earth;—of all that period, in Ireland, abounding as it was in scholars and writers extraordinary for their time, not a single authentic manuscript now remains; not a single written relic, such as ought to convince that class of skeptics who look to direct proofs alone, that the art of writing even existed in those days. The very same causes—the constant ravages of invasion and the blind fury of internal dissension*—which occasioned the destruction and loss of manuscripts between the time of St. Patrick and the ninth or tenth century, account with still stronger force for the disappearance of all earlier vestiges of writing; and, in fact, the more recent and scanty at present are the remains of the acknowledged era of Irish literature, the more it weakens the argument drawn from the want of any such visible relics of the ages preceding it.†

* "Nec mirum," says Ware, in the dedication prefixed to his account of Irish writers; "nam periisse liquet plurimorum notitiam, unà cum multo maxima operum eorum parte, cum Hibernia nostra seditionibus intestinis oppressa, quasi miseriarum diluvio inundata fuerit."

Of the wanton destruction of Irish manuscripts which took place after the invasion of the English, I shall, in a subsequent part of this work, have occasion to speak. Many of these precious remains were, as the author of Cambrensis Eversus tells us, actually torn up by boys for covers of books, and by tailors for measures:—"Inter pueros in ludis literariis ad librorum sittibas, et inter sartores ad lascinias pro vestium forma dimetiendi." "It was till the time of James I.," says Mr. Webb, "an object of government to discover and destroy every literary remain of the Irish, in order the more fully to eradicate from their minds every trace of their ancient independence."—*Analysis of the Antiq. of Ireland.*

† The absurd reasoning of the opponents of Irish antiquities on this point has been well exposed by the English writer just cited:—"The more recent they can by any means make this date, the greater, in their opinion, is the objection to the authenticity of Irish history, and to the pretensions of the national antiqua-

We have seen that a manuscript copy of the Four Gospels, still extant, is said to have been written by the hand of St. Columbkill; and to this copy Dr. O'Connor triumphantly refers, as affording an irrefragable answer to those who deny the existence of any Irish manuscript of an older date than the tenth century.* But the zeal of this amiable scholar in the cause of his country's antiquities, and the facility with which, on most points connected with that theme, he adopts as proved what has only been boldly asserted, render even him, with all his real candour and learning, not always a trust-worthy witness; and the result of the researches on this point, in Ireland, of one whose experience in the study of manuscripts, combined with his general learning, render him an authority of no ordinary weight,† is that the oldest Irish manuscript which has been discovered in that country, is the Psalter of Cashel, written in the latter end of the ninth century.

For any remains, therefore, of our vernacular literature before that period, which have reached us, we are indebted to Tigernach and the annalists preceding him, through whom a few short pieces of ancient poetry have been transmitted; and to those writers of the tenth century, who, luckily taking upon themselves the office of compilers, have made us acquainted with the contents of many curious works which, though extant in their times, have since been lost. Among the fragments transmitted through the annalists are some distichs by the arch-poet Dubtach, one of St. Patrick's earliest converts, the antiquated idiom of which is accounted, by Irish scholars, to be in itself a sufficient proof of their authenticity.‡ A few other fragments from poets of that period have been preserved by the same trust-worthy chronicler; and it appears on the whole highly probable, that while abroad, as we have seen, such adventurous Irishmen as Pelagius and Cœlestius were entering into the lists with the great champions of orthodoxy,—while Sedulius was taking his place among the later Latin classics,—there were also, in Ireland itself, poets, or Fileas, employing their native language, and either then recently quickened into exertion by the growing intercourse of their country with the rest of Europe, or forming but links, perhaps, of a long bardic succession extending to remote times.

According as we descend the stream of his Annals, the metrical fragments cited by Tigernach become more numerous; and a poet of the seventh century, Cenfaelad, furnishes a number of these homely ornaments of his course. The singular fate of the monarch, Murcertach, who, in the year 534, was drowned in a hogshead of wine, seems to have formed a favourite theme with the poets, as no less than three short pieces of verse on this subject have been preserved by the annalists, written respectively by the three poets, Cernach, Sin, and Cenfaelad. In these, as in all the other fragments assigned to that period, there is to be found, as the learned editor of the Irish Chronicles informs us, a peculiar idiom and structure of verse, which denotes them to be of the early date to which they are assigned. It would appear, indeed, that the modern contrivance of rhyme, which is generally supposed to have had a far other source, may be traced to its origin in the ancient *rans* or *rins*, as they termed their stanzas, of the Irish. The able historian of the Anglo-Saxons, in referring to some Latin verses of Aldhelm, which he appears to consider as the earliest specimen of rhyme now extant, professes himself at a loss to discover whence that form of verse could have been derived.§ But already, before the time of Aldhelm, the use of rhyme had been familiar among the Irish, as well in their vernacular verses as in those which they wrote in Latin. Not to dwell on such instances, in the latter language, as the Hymns of St. Columba, respecting whose authenticity there may be some question, an example of Latin verses interspersed with rhyme is to be found among the poems of St. Columbanus,‖ which preceded those of

rians to an early use of letters among their countrymen." He afterwards adds:—"If we possess so few Irish manuscripts, written before the twelfth century, it is plain that, by adducing this circumstance, they the more clearly ascertain the extent of those disturbances which destroyed every historical record prior to the tenth, and which must have been far more effectual in causing to perish every remain of the fifth age."—*Id.*

* After quoting Usher's account of the Kells manuscript, Dr. O'Connor says:—
"Habemus itaque, ex indubitatæ fidei scriptoribus ad nostra fere tempora extitisse antiquissimus codices, characteribus Hibernicis scriptos, qui longo ante seculum decimum exarati fuere; ita ut a veritate plurimum abesse consendi sunt qui nullum ante seculum X. codicem characteribus Hibernicis scriptum extare opinantur."—*Rer. Hib. Script. Ep. Nunc.*

† Astle, Origin and Progress of Writing.

‡ "Carminis antiquitatem indicant phrases jam obsoletæ, et a recentiorum idiomate alienæ."—*Ep. Nunc. cv.*

§ "Here, then," says Mr. Turner, "is an example of rhyme in an author who lived before the year 700, and he was an Anglo-Saxon. Whence did he derive it? Not from the Arabs: they had not yet reached Europe."

‖ Beginning,

"Mundus iste transit et quotidie decrescit:
Nemo vivens manebit, nullus vivus remanait."

Though the rhymes, or coincident sounds, occur thus, in general, on the final syllable, there are instances throughout the poem of complete double rhymes. As, for instance,

Aldhelm by near half a century. So far back, indeed, as the fifth century, another Irish poet, Sedulius, had, in some of the verses of his well-known hymn on the Life of Christ, left a specimen of much the same sort of rhyme.* As practised most generally, in their own language, by the Irish, this method consisted in rhyming at every hemistich, or, in other words, making the syllable in the middle of the line rhyme to that of the end; much in the manner of those verses called, in the twelfth century, Leonine, from the name of the writer who had best succeeded in them. According to this "art of the Irish,"† as it was styled, most of the distichs preserved by Tigernach from the old poets were constructed; and it is plain that Aldhelm, whose instructor, Maidulph, was a native of Ireland, must have derived his knowledge of this, as well as of all other literary accomplishments of that day, from the lips of his learned master. How nearly bordering on jealousy was his own admiration of the schools of the Irish has been seen in the sarcastic letter addressed by him to Eaghfrid, who had just returned from a course of six years' study in that country, overflowing, as it would appear, with gratitude and praise.

In its infant state, poetry has been seldom separated from music; and it is probable that most of the stanzas cited by the annalist were meant originally to be associated with song. Of some of the juvenile works of St. Columbanus we are told, that they were "worthy of being sung;"‡ and a scene brought vividly, in a few words, before our eyes, by the Irish biographer of Columba, represents that holy man as sitting, along with his brethren, upon the banks of the beautiful lake Kee,§ while among them was a poet skilled, we are told, in modulating song to verse, "after the manner of his art."‖ That it was to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument, called the Cruit, they performed these songs or chants, appears to be the most general opinion. In some distichs on the death of Columba, preserved in the Annals of the Four Masters¶, we find mention of this kind of harp** in rather a touching passage:—"Like a song of the cruit without joy, is the sound that follows our master to the tomb;" and its common use in the eighth century, as an accompaniment to the voice, may be implied from Bede's account of the religious poet Ceadmon, who, in order to avoid taking a part in the light songs of society, always rose, as he tells us, from table when the harp was sent round, and it came to his turn to sing and play. The Italians, who are known to have been in possession of the harp before the time of Dante, are, by a learned musician of their own country, Galilei, said to have derived it from Ireland; the instrument, according to his account, being no other than a cithara with many strings, and having, at the time when he wrote, four octaves and a tone in compass.

How little music, though so powerful in its influence on the feelings, either springs

"Dilexerunt tenebras tetras magis quam lucem;
Imitari contemnunt vitæ Dominum Ducem,
Velut in somnis regnent, unâ horâ lætantur,
Sed æterna tormenta adhuc illis parantur."

* The following lines from this hymn will afford a specimen of the Irish method of rhyming:—

"A solis ortus cardine, ad usque terræ limites,
Christum canamus principem—natum Maria virgine."

But it is still more correctly exemplified in a hymn in honour of St. Brigid, written, as some say, by Columbkill; but, according to others, by St. Ultan of Ardbraccan. See Usher, Eccles. Primord. 963.

"Christum in nostra insula—quæ vocatur Hibernia,
Ostensus est hominibus—maximis mirabilibus," &c.

† From the following account of the metrical structure of Irish verse it will be seen that it was peculiarly such as a people of strong musical feeling (and with whom the music was the chief object) would be likely to invent and practise:—

"The rhymth consists in an equal distance of intervals, and similar terminations, each line being divisible into two, that it may be more easily accommodated to the voice and the music of the bards. It is not formed by the nice collocation of long and short syllables, but by a certain harmonic rhythm, adjusted to the voice of song by the position of words which touch the heart and assist the memory."—*Essay by Dr. Drummond, Trans. of Royal Irish Acad.* vol. xvi.

‡ "Ad canendum digna,"—so pronounced by his biographer Jonas.

§ In the county of Roscommon.

‖ Alio in tempore S. Columba, cum juxta stagnum Cei, prope ostium fluminis quod Latine *Bos* dicitur (i. e. the Boyle river) die aliqua cum fratribus sederet, quidam ad eos Scoticus poeta devenit. Qui cum recessisset, Fratres ad Sanctum, cur, inquiunt, aliquod ex more suæ artis, canticum non postulasti modulabiliter decantari.—*Adamnan.* lib. i. c. 42.

¶ Ad ann. 593. Written by Dallan Feargall, and thus translated by Dr. O'Connor:—

Est medicina medici absque remedio—est Dei decretum timor cum mœrore.
Est carmen cum cythara sine gaudio—sonus sequens nostrum Ducem ad sepulchrum.

** Of this instrument, the harp, the Irish are said to have had four different species; the clarsach, the keirnine, the cronar cruit, and the creamtheine cruit; for all of which see Walker, *Hist. Mem. of Irish Bards*, Beauford, *ibid.*, *Appendix*, and Ledwich's *Antiquities*. What Montfaucon, however, says of the different names given to the lyre, among the ancients, may also, perhaps, be applicable here:—"Among this great diversity I cannot but think the same instrument must often be signified by different names."

from, or is dependent upon, intellect, appears from the fact, that some of the most exquisite effusions of this art have had their origin among the simplest and most uncultivated people; nor can all that taste and science bring afterwards to the task do more, in general, than diversify, by new combinations, those first wild strains of gaiety or passion into which nature had infused her original inspiration. In Greece the sweetness of the ancient music had already been lost, when all the other arts were but on their way to perfection;* and from the account given by Giraldus Cambrensis† of the Irish harpers of the twelfth century,‡ it may be inferred that the melodies of the country, at the earlier period of which we are speaking, was in some degree like the first music of the infant age of Greece, and partook of the freshness of that morning of mind and hope which was then awakening around them.

With respect to the structure of the ancient Irish harp, there does not appear to have been any thing accurately ascertained; but, from that retentiveness of all belonging to the past which we have shown to have characterized this people, it appears most probable that their favourite instrument was kept sacredly unaltered; and remained the same perhaps in later times, when it charmed the ears of English poets and philosophers,§ as when it had been modulated by the bard Cronan, in the sixth century, upon the banks of the lake Kee.

It would appear that the church music, likewise, of the Irish, enjoyed no inconsiderable repute in the seventh century, as we find Gertrude, the daughter of the potent Maire du Palais, Pepin, sending to Ireland for persons qualified to instruct the nuns of the Abbey of Nivelle in psalmody;‖ and the great monastery of Bangor, or Benchoir, near Carrickfergus, is supposed, by Ware, to have derived its name from the White Choir which belonged to it.¶ A certain sect of antiquarians, whose favourite object it is to prove that the Irish church was in no respect connected with Rome, have imagined some mode by which, through the medium of Asiatic missionaries, her Chant of Psalmody might have been derived to her directly from the Greeks. But their whole hypothesis is shown to be a train of mere gratuitous assumption; and it is little doubted that, before the introduction of the Latin, or Gregorian Chant, by St. Malachy, which took place in the twelfth century, the style of music followed by the Irish, in their church service, was that which had been introduced by St. Patrick and his companions from Gaul.**

The religious zeal which, at this period, covered the whole island with monasteries and churches, had not, in the materials at least of architecture, introduced any change or improvement. Stone structures were still unknown; and the forest of oak which, from

* See Anacharsis, chap. 27. *notes* v. vii "It is remarkable," says Wood, "that the old chaste Greek melody was lost in refinement before their other arts had acquired perfection."—*Essay on Homer.*

† *Topograph. Dist.* 3. c. 11. This curious passage, which appears, though confusedly, even to imply that the Irish were acquainted with counterpoint, is prefaced by a declaration that in their music alone does he find any thing to commend in that people:—"In musicis solum instrumentis commendabilem invenio gentis istæ diligentiam." The passage in question is thus translated in Mr. Walker's Hist. Mem. of the Irish Bards:—"It is wonderful how, in such precipitate rapidity of the fingers, the musical proportions are preserved; and by their art, faultless throughout, in the midst of their complicated modulations, and most intricate arrangement of notes, by a rapidity so sweet, a regularity so irregular, a concord so discordant, the melody is rendered harmonious and perfect, whether the chords of the diatesseron or diapente are struck together; yet they always begin in a soft mood, and end in the same, that all may be perfect in the sweetness of delicious sounds. They enter on, and again leave, their modulations with so much subtility, and the tinglings of the small strings sport with so much freedom, under the deep notes of the bass," &c. &c.

"Mirum quod in tanta tam præcipiti digitorum capacitate musica servatur proportio: et arte per omnia indemni inter crispatos modulos, organaque multipliciter intricata, tam suavi velocitate, tam dispari paritate, tam discordi concordia consona redditur et completur melodia, seu diatesseron seu diapente chordæ concrepent. Semper tamen ab molli incipiunt et in idem redeunt, ut cuncta sub jucundæ sonoritatis dulcedine compleantur. Tam subtiliter modulos intrant et exeunt; sicque sub obtuso grossioris chordæ sonitu, gracilium tinnitus licentius ludunt," &c. &c.—*Topograph. Hibern.* dist. 3. cap. 11.

‡ "Even so late as the eleventh century," says Warton, "the practice continued among the Welsh bards of receiving instructions in the Bardic profession from Ireland."—*Hist. of English Poetry.*

§ Alluding to such tributes as the following:—

"The Irish I admire
And still cleave to that lyre,
As our muse's mother;
And think, till I expire,
Apollo's such another."—*Drayton.*

"The harp," says Bacon, "hath the concave not along the strings, but across the strings; and no harp hath the sound so melting and prolonged as the Irish harp."—*Sylv. Sylvar.* See also Selden's Notes on Drayton's Polyolbion.

The following is from Evelyn's Journal:—"Came to see my old acquaintance, and the most incomparable player on the Irish harp, Mr. Clarke, after his travels . . . . . Such music before or since did I never hear, that instrument being neglected for its extraordinary difficulty; but in my judgment far superior to the lute itself, or whatever speaks with strings."

‖ "Poor instruire la communauté dans la chant des Psaumes et la méditation des choses saintes."—Quoted from Fleury by D'Alton, Essay, 216.

¶ According to O'Halloran and Dr. O'Connor, the name Benn-Choir signifies Sweet Choir.

** See, on this subject, Lanigan, chap. xxvi. note 46.

old heathen associations, had suggested the site of the church, furnished also the rude material of which it was constructed. In some few instances these wooden edifices were encircled by an enclosure of stone, called a casiol, like that which Bede describes as surrounding a chapel erected on Holy Island by St. Cuthbert. The first churches, indeed, of Northumbria were all constructed of wood; and that of St. Finan, the Irish bishop, at Lindisfarn, was, as we are told, built after "the fashion of his country, not of stone, but of split oak, and covered with reeds."*

When such was the rude simplicity of their ecclesiastical architecture, it may be concluded that their dwellings were still more homely and frail; and in this, as in most of the other arts of life, their slow progress may be ascribed mainly to their civil institutions. Where possessions were all temporary, the natural motive to build durably was wanting. Instead of being brought together, too, in cities, where emulation and mutual interchange of mind would have been sure to lead to improvement, the separate clans of the Irish sat down, each in its hereditary canton, seldom meeting but in the field, as fellow-combatants, or as foes. In this respect, the religious zeal which now universally prevailed supplied, in some degree, the place of industry and commerce; and, among the many civilizing effects of the monastic institutions, it was not the least useful that, wherever established, they were the means of attracting multitudes around them, and, by examples of charity and self-denial, inspiring them with better motives than those of clanship for mutual dependence and concert. The community collected, by degrees, around the Oak of St. Brigid, at Kildare, grew at length into a large and flourishing town; and even the solitary cell of St. Kevin, among the mountains, drew around it, by degrees, such a multitude of dwellings as, in the course of time, to form a holy city in the wilderness.†

With regard to our evidence of the state of agriculture, at this period, the language employed, on such subjects, in the Lives of the Saints, our only sources of information, is too vague and general to afford any certain knowledge. The tending of sheep was, as we have seen, the task assigned to St. Patrick during his servitude; and it is, indeed, most probable that pasturage was then, as it continued for many centuries after, the chief employment of the people.‡ The memorable "Earn," however, of the apostle's friend Dicho, implies obviously the practice of hoarding grain; and from an account given, in the annals for the year 650, of a murder which took place in "the bake-house of a mill," it would appear that water-mills§ had already been brought into use at that time.‖ There is, indeed, mention made, in one of the Brehon Laws,¶ though of what period seems uncertain, both of carpenters and millwrights.

Another of these Irish Laws, said to be of great antiquity, shows that the practice of irrigating lands must have been in use when it was enacted: as it thus regulates the common right in the water:—"According to the Fenechas, the common right of drawn water belongs to the land from which it is drawn. It is therefore that all require that it shall run freely the first day over the entire land. For right in the water belongs to none but in the land from which it is drawn."**

The biographer of St. Columba, besides employing the terms ploughing and sowing, mentions as the result, on one occasion, of the abbot's prayers and intercessions, that they had an abundant harvest. The discipline of the monks, enjoining herbs and pulse†† as their chief food, would lead to the culture of such productions in their gardens. The mention of honey-comb, too, as part of the monastic diet, concurs, with some curious early laws on the subject,‡‡ to prove their careful attention to the rearing of bees; and

* In insula Lindisfarnensi fecit ecclesiam episcopali sede congruam, quam tamen more Scotorum non de lapide sed de robore secto totam composuit atque arundine texit.—*Bede*, lib. 3. cap. 25.

† "In ipso loco clara et religiosa civitas in honore S. Coemgeni (Kevin) crevit quæ nomine prædictæ vallis in quâ ipsa est Gleandaloch vocatur."—Quoted by Usher, from a life of St. Kebin, Eccles. Primord. 956.

‡ It was for this reason that they appeared to Giraldus as not yet in his time emerged from the pastoral life:—"Gens agriculturæ labores aspernans, a primo pastoralis vitæ vivendi modo non recedens." That Spenser held it to be no less a cause than a sign of the want of civilization, appears from the following strong sentence:—"To say truth, though Ireland be by nature accounted a great soil of pasture, yet had I rather have fewer cows kept, and men better mannered, than to have such huge increase of cattle, and no increase of good conditions. I would, therefore, wish that there were some ordinances made amongst them, that whosoever keepeth twenty kine should keep a plough going; for, otherwise, all men would fall to pasturage, and none to husbandry."—*View of the State of Ireland.*

§ Annal. iv Mag. ad ann. 647.—See Dr. O'Connor's note on the passage.

‖ The introduction of water-mills into the British Isles is attributed, by Whitaker, to the Romans; and from hence, he says, this sort of mill is called *Melin* in the British, and *Muilan* or *Muiland* in the Irish.

¶ Collectan. Hibern. No. 1.

** O'Reilly on the Brehon Laws, Trans. Royal Irish Academy, vol. xiv.

†† "Cibus sit villis et vespertinus monachorum, satietatem fugiens et potus ebrietatem, ut et sustineat et non noceat. Olera, legumina, farinæ aquis mixtæ," &c.—*Columban. Reg.* cap. 3.

‡‡ "Whoever plunders or steals bees from out a garden or fort is subject to a like penalty as if he steal them out of a habitation, for these are ordained of equal penalty by law." Again, "Bees in an enclosure, or

not only apple-trees, but even vines, are said to have been cultivated by the inmates of the monasteries.

Of the skill of the workers in various metals at this period, as well as of the lapidaries and painters, we are told wonders by the hagiologists, who expatiate at length on the staff of St. Patrick, covered with gold and precious stones, the tomb of St. Brigid at Kildare, surmounted by crowns of gold and silver, and the walls of the church at the same place, adorned with holy paintings. But it is plain that all this luxury of religious ornament, as well as those richly illuminated manuscripts which Dr. O'Connor and others have described, must all be referred to a somewhat later period.

Of the use of war-chariots among the Irish,* in the same manner as among the Britons and the Greeks, some notice has already been taken; and this sort of vehicle was employed also by the ancient Irish for the ordinary purposes of travelling. The self-devotion of St. Patrick's charioteer has made him memorable in our history; and both St. Brigid and Columba performed their progresses, we are told, in the same sort of carriage. There is also a canon of the synod attributed to St. Patrick, which forbids a monk to travel from one town to another, in the same chariot with a female.†

Reference has been made, in the course of this chapter, to the early Brehon Laws, and could we have any dependence on the date assigned to such of these laws as have been published, or even on the correctness of the translations given of them, they would unquestionably be very important documents. Of those published by Vallancey it has been pronounced, by a writer not over-credulous,‡ that they bear strong internal marks of antiquity; and while the comment on the several laws is evidently, we are told, the work of some Christian juris-consults, the laws themselves wear every appearance of being of ancient, if not of Pagan, times. No mention occurs in them of foreigners, or of foreign septs, in Ireland. The regulations they contain for the barter of goods, and for the payment of fines by cattle and other commodities, mark a period when coin had not yet come into general use; while the more modern date of the Comment, it is said, is manifested by its substituting, for such primitive modes of payment, gold and silver taken by weight. Mention is made in them, also, of the Taltine Games and the Convocation of the States; and it is forbidden, under the pain of an Eric, to imprison any person for debt during these meetings.

With the single exception, perhaps, of the absence of any allusion to foreigners, there is not one of these alleged marks of antiquity that would not suit equally well with the state and condition of Ireland down to a period later, by many centuries, than that at which we are arrived; the payment by cattle and the law of the Eric having been retained, as we shall find, to a comparatively recent date.

With respect to the manner in which the Irish laws were delivered down, whether in writing or by tradition, there has been much difference of opinion; and the poet Spenser, in general well informed on Irish subjects, declares the Brehon Law to be "a rule of right unwritten." Sir John Davies, too, asserts that "its rules were learned rather by tradition than by reading." This is evidently, however, an erroneous representation. Without referring to the Collections of Judgments, or Codes of Laws, which are said to have been compiled under some of the heathen princes, we find, after the introduction of Christianity, the Great Code, or Seanchas-More, as it was called, drawn up with the aid, according to some writers, of St. Patrick,§ but supposed by others to have been of a much later date.

In the seventh century, a body of the laws of the country was compiled and digested, we are told, from the scattered writings of former lawyers, by three learned brothers, the sons of O'Burechan, of whom one was a judge, the second a bishop, and the third a poet.‖ The great number, indeed, of Irish manuscripts still extant, on the subject of the Brehon Laws, sufficiently refutes the assertion of Spenser and others, that these laws were delivered down by tradition alone. In the very instance, mentioned by Sir John Davies, of the aged Brehon whom he met within Fermanagh, the information given reluctantly by this old man, respecting a point of local law, was gained by reference to an ancient

fort, and in a garden, are of the same account (as to property, penalty, &c.) as the wealth, or substance of a habitation." Extracted from inedited Brehon Laws, in an Essay on the Rise and Progress of Gardening in Ireland, by J. C. Walker. See Antholog. Hibern., vol. i., and Trans. Royal Acad. vol. iv.

* The king of the Irish Crutheni, or Picts, is described by Adamnan as escaping from the field of battle in a chariot:—"Quemadmodum victus currui insidens evaserit."

† Monachus et virgo . . . in uno curru à villa in villam non discurrant.

‡ Leland, Hist. of Ireland, Preliminary Discourse.

§ Anno Christi 438 et regis Leogarii decimo, vetustis codicibus allisque antiquis Hiberniæ monumentis undique conquisitis, et ad unum locum congregatis, Hiberniæ Antiquitates et Sanctiones Legales S. Patricii authoritate repurgatæ et conscriptæ sunt.—*Annal. Mag. IV.*

‖ Ware's Writers, chap. iv.

parchment roll, "written in fair Irish character," which the Brehon carried about with him always in his bosom.* The truth appears to be, that both tradition and writing were employed concurrently in preserving these laws; the practice of oral delivery being still retained after the art of writing them down was known; and a custom which tended much to perpetuate this mode of tradition, was the duty imposed upon every Filea, or Royal Poet, to learn by heart the Brehon Law, in order to be able to assist the memory of the judge.†

On the whole, whatever may be thought of the claims to a high antiquity of the numerous remains of the Brehon Law that have come down to us, of the immemorial practice of this form of jurisprudence among the ancient Irish, and of the fond, obstinate reverence with which, long after they had passed under the English yoke, they still continued to cling to it, there exists not the slightest doubt. In the fifth century, the Brehons were found by St. Patrick dispensing their then ancient laws upon the hills; and, more than a thousand years after, the law-officers of Britain found in the still revered Brehon the most formidable obstacle to their plans.

CHAPTER XV.

Invasion of Ireland by the Danes.—Supposed intercourse with the Northern Nations at an early period.—The Black Strangers and the White Strangers.—Reign of King Niell of the Showers.—Battle of Almhain.—State of Ireland at this period.—Weakness of the monarchy.—Increasing strength of the Throne of Munster.—Causes of both.—Reign of the Monarch Aidus.—Devastations of the Danes.—Political connexion of the Irish Kings with Charlemagne.—Inroads of the monarch into Leinster.

According to the most trust-worthy of English records,‡ it was in the year 787 that those formidable pirates of the north of Europe, known by the general name of Danes, made, for the first time, their appearance upon the coasts of Britain.§ This expedition, which consisted but of three ships, had been, most probably, sent to ascertain the localities and resources of these regions, and to see how far they held forth temptations to the invader and the spoiler. It would appear that the report made by this party, on their return, was of no very encouraging nature, as nearly eight years elapsed before another experiment of the same kind was tried; and the attempts upon the English and the Irish coasts took place nearly about the same time;—the small island of Rechran, at present Raghlin,‖ having been, in the year 795, laid waste by the Danes.¶

At what period these nations of the north became for the first time acquainted with Ireland has been a subject of much doubt and controversy among our historians. While, according to some, the calamitous epoch we are now approaching witnessed the first descent of northern adventurers upon these shores, there are others who maintain that traces of habitual intercourse between the people of Ireland and the Lochlans, or Danes, may be discovered in the Irish annals, as far back as the first century of our era. There

* Letter to the Earl of Salisbury, Collectan. vol. i.

† "In order to qualify the Filé," says Mr. O'Reilly, "for this important office, the rules for the education of the poetic professors required that every *Dos*, or poet of the third degree, before he was qualified to become a *Cana*, or poet of the fourth degree, should repeat, in the presence of the king and the nobles, the *Breithe Neimhidh*, i. e. the Law of the Degrees or Ranks, and fifty poems of his own composition."—*Essay on the Brehon Laws.*

‡ Chron. Sax.

§ Usher, *Ind. Chron.* Some foreign historians date the first of this series of northern invasions so early as the year 700. "Pontanus et Torfæus," says Langebek, "nimis vetustum in illis insulis dominium ab anno 700 circiter tribuerunt."—*De Servitiis quæ Regni Mannia, &c.*

‖ Seward, *Topog. Hibern.* According to the Rev. Mr. Hamilton, however, who has given an account of this island (*Letters concerning the Coast of Antrim,*) it is at present called Raghery; meaning, as he rather fancifully conjectures, Ragh-Erin, or the Fort of Erin. To this secluded spot Robert Bruce fled for refuge when driven to extremities by the English King; and the remains of a fortress which tradition has connected with his name are still visible on the northern angle of the island.

The annals of Ulster refer to A. D. 747, the date of this attack upon Rechrain, by the Danes, and record as the first achievement of these marauders, the drowning of the Abbot of Rechran's pigs—"Baduth Arascaich ab. Muiccinnse re guil."

¶ The Welsh chronicler, Caradoc of Lancarvan, (whom Usher, in this instance inconsiderably follows,) states the greater part of Ireland to have been devastated in the same year, 795: "Maximam Hiberniæ partem popalati Rechreyn quoque vastaverunt." The Danes, however, did not penetrate into the interior of the country until several years later.

is, indeed, no doubt that the appellation Lochlan, or Dwellers on Lakes, by which the Irish, from about the beginning of the ninth century, are known to have designated their Danish invaders, was employed also in their earlier annals to denote some northern nation with which they were at that time in habits of intercourse and commerce. But whether these earlier Lochlanders were of the same race or region with those who afterwards poured from the great Scandinavian reservoir, there appears to be no means of ascertaining.

In proof of the Danes having been the people with whom this early intercourse was maintained, the authority of a number of northern historians has been adduced, according to whose accounts it would seem that, from a period preceding the birth of Christ, a succession of invasions of this island from Denmark had been commenced;* and that, for some centuries after, a course of alternate hostility and friendship marked the relations between the two countries. Imposing, however, as is the array of northern authorities for this statement, the entire value of their united evidence may be reduced to that of the single testimony of Saxo Grammaticus, from whose pages they have all copied; and it is well known that, for all the earlier portion of this eloquent writer's history, the foundation is as unsound and unreal as Scaldic fable and fallacious chronology could make it. The only circumstance that lends any semblance of credit to the accounts given by northern historians of the early fortunes of Ireland, is the known fact, that the chief materials of their own history were derived from records preserved in Iceland; to which island, inaccessible as it might seem to have been to the rude navigation of those days,† it is certain that a number of Irish missionaries of the seventh and eighth centuries contrived to find their way. We learn, from more than one authentic source, that, when the Norwegians first arrived in Iceland, they found there traces of its having been previously inhabited by a Christian people; and the Irish books, bells, and holy staves, left behind by the former dwellers, sufficiently denoted the religious island from whence they had migrated.‡ The title of Papas, which it appears was borne by them, has led to the conclusion that they must have been Irish priests who had adventurously fixed themselves in this desolate region; and, under the same name, they were found in Orkneys when the Norwegians conquered those islands.

Unless we were to suppose, however, that among the books left by these missionaries in Iceland, there were any relating to Irish history of which the chroniclers consulted by Saxo might have availed themselves, the incident, though curious and well attested, affords but slight grounds for placing reliance on these early northern annals, whose sources of information are known to have been spurious, and to whose general character for extravagant fiction, the few brief notices which they contain respecting Irish affairs can hardly be expected to furnish an exception. Nor is any more serious credit due to them, when they represent Dublin to have been in possession of the Danes a short time before the birth of Christ,§ than when they assert that London was built by these northern people about the very same period.

Fabulous, however, as are these accounts, yet that, long before either the Danish or even the Saxon invasions, the coasts of the Baltic had sent forth colonies to some of the British Isles, is a fact to which foreign as well as domestic tradition bears testimony. The conjecture of Tacitus, that the people called Picts were a Germanic, or northern race, is confirmed by the traditional accounts of this people, preserved in the chronicles of Britain; and all the early Scandinavian legends concur with the annals of Ireland in intimating, at some remote period, relations of intercourse between the two countries. We have seen, in a preceding part of this work, what almost certain grounds there are for believing that those Scythe, or Scots, who, at the time when Ireland first became known to modern Europe, formed the dominant part of her people, were a colony from some

* The Scandinavians were very early practised in navigation; insomuch that the Sueones who occupied anciently the present Sweden and the Danish isles are said by Tacitus to have dwelt in the ocean,—"ipso in oceano."—*Germ.* c. 44. See also Pliny, lib. iv. 30.

† It is said that these northern navigators carried ravens with them in their expeditions, for the purpose of discovering distant land by the direction of the flight of these birds. See Barrow's *Voyages into the Polar Regions.*

‡ Mallet's *Northern Antiquities*, c. ii. By Foster it is supposed that these articles may have been left at Iceland by some of the Norman pirates, who, after plundering Ireland, may have directed their course to the westward with their booty. (*Northern Voyages.*) The following is the account given of this interesting circumstance in the *Antiquitat. Scando-Celt.*—"Before Iceland was inhabited by the Norwegians, there were men there whom the Norwegians call *Papas*, and who professed the Christian religion, and are thought to have come by sea from the West; for there were left by them Irish books, bells, and crooked staves, and several other things were found which seemed to indicate that they were west-men."

§ The Danish King, Frotho, who, according to their accounts, seized upon Dublin, at this remote period, found so much wealth, as they tell us, in the royal treasury of that city, that no regular partition of the booty was made, but every soldier was allowed to carry away as much as he pleased.—Pet. Olai, *Chronica Reg. Dan.*

region bordering on the Baltic Sea which had, a few centuries before, gained possession of this island. From whatever part these Scythian adventurers may have arrived, whether from the Cimbric peninsula, the islands of the Baltic, or the Scandinavian shores, it may be coucluded that with that region the occasional intercourse was afterwards maintained, and those alliances and royal intermarriages formed of which, in our ancient traditions and records, some scattered remembrances still remain.*

With respect to those swarms of sea-rovers who, throughout the dark and troubled period we are now approaching, carried on their long career of havoc and blood, though known most popularly in English history by the general name of Danes, they are but rarely, and not till a late period, thus designated in our annals. By Tigernach, the earliest existing annalist, they are invariably called Gâll, or Strangers; while, in the Annals of Inisfallen, of Ulster, and of the Four Masters, they are styled indifferently either Galls, Gentiles, Dwellers on the Lakes, or Pirates; but, in not more than two or three instances, are they called Normans,† and as seldom Danes.

In the present kingdoms of Sweden and Denmark, including, as the latter does, Norway, was comprised the vast extent of territory which, in those days, poured forth almost its whole population over the waters, and made all the coasts of Europe tributary to its unnumbered Sea Kings. Though confounded, therefore, ordinarily under the general name of Northmen, these daring adventurers, among whom piracy was, as among the Greeks of the Homeric age, accounted an honourable calling, were, it is clear, a miscellaneous aggregate of Norwegians, Danes, Swedes, Livonians, Saxons, and Frisians,‡ whose expeditions, independent respectively of each other, and having no common object but plunder and devastation, kept all the maritime districts of the west of Europe in a state of constant dismay. The only distinction employed by the Irish to denote any difference between the several tribes that invaded them, was that of Black Strangers and White Strangers; and under these distinctive appellations we find two great bodies of these foreigners designated, who, about the year 850, contested fiercely with each other the possession of Dublin and its adjoining territories. It may be remarked as at least a curious coincidence in favour of the opinion of those who regard the Picts, or Caledonians, as of a congenerous race with these later invaders,§ that the very same distinction was applied to that people by the Romans of the fourth century; who, as we learn from Ammianus, divided them into Ducalidones and Vecturiones, signifying the Black Picts and the White Picts.

Between the political institutions of Britain and Ireland, there existed, at the time when the northern invasions we are about to notice took place, a very strong similitude; rendering them both, perhaps, in an equal degree, incapable of presenting that firm front to an invader which, in countries less parcelled out into dynasties,‖ and therefore more compact in will and power, would have been most probably displayed. In the one single kingdom of Northumbria, we find represented, upon a smaller scale, almost a counterpart of those scenes of discord and misrule which form the main action of Irish history in those times; the same rapid succession and violent deaths of most of the reigning chieftains, and the same recklessness of the public weal which in general marked their whole career.

The two predominant pursuits of the Irish in those days—war and religion—are most strikingly exemplified in the different fates of the successive monarchs, whose uninteresting existence is drily recorded throughout this period. For while most of them, as one of their own historians expresses it, died with swords in their hands, there were also many who, exchanging the camp for the cloister, devoted the close of their days to penitence and seclusion; and the monarch Niell of the Showers,¶ who died in pilgrimage at Iona, was deposited, with three others of his royal countrymen, in the Tombs of the Kings in that island.**

* See p. 65, of this Work.

† In one instance (IV. *Mag. ad an.* 797.) we find the term "Norman" inserted by a more recent hand.

‡ La vaste étendue de la Scandinavie étant partagée alors entre plusieurs peuples peu connus, et seulement désignés par des noms généraux, comme ceux de Goths et de Normans, par exemple, on ne pouvoit savoir exactement de quelle contrée chaque troupe étoit originaire."—Mallet, *Introduct.*

§ See p. 67, of this Work.

‖ During the Heptarchy Britain contained about fifteen kingdoms, Saxon, British, and Scotch; and the kingdom of Kent, the smallest of them all, could at one time boast no less than three kings.

¶ Niell *Trassach.*—"He was so surnamed, because, as some authors say, in his reign (but more authentic authors say the night he was born,) three Showers, viz. a Shower of Honey, a Shower of Silver (we have some of the same yet in the kingdom, called the twelve-grain penny,) and a Shower of Blood, happened in Ireland; and the names of the certain places wherein they fell are mentioned in the Antiquity Books."—Mc. Curtin, *Brief Discourse in Vindication of the Antiquity of Ireland.*

** "The tomb on the southe syde foresaid has this inscription, *Tumulus Regum Hybernie*, that is, The tomb of the Irland kinges; for we have in our auld Erische cronickells, ther wer foure Irland kinges eirdit in the said tombe."—Monro's *Western Isles.*

During the century that elapsed previously to this period, notwithstanding the advancement of a great portion of the people in all the knowledge of those times, the character of the civil transactions of the country still continued to be at the same low and barbarous level; and the few efforts made from time to time to get rid of some of the numerous sources of strife,—as in the instance of the odious Boarian tribute, which the monarch Finactha, as we have seen, remitted "for himself and his successors for ever,"*—were rendered unavailing either by the force of old habit, or by new demands of violence and rapacity. Not half a century had elapsed from the time of the renunciation of this tax, when the claim to it was again brought forward by the monarch Fergall; who, at the head of an army of 21,000 men, invaded Leinster to enforce its payment.† The force assembled by the king of that province to repel this inroad amounted, we are told, to no more than 9000 men; but they were the flower of his kingdom, and were commanded on this occasion by about 100 champions of the highest military renown. A. D. 722.

It was at Almhain, a spot memorable in the Finian songs and legends‡ for having been the residence of the Leinster hero, Fin-Mac-Cumhal, that the shock of the two hostile armies took place; and, notwithstanding the gallantry of the Lagenian troops, and the inspirations of the better cause for which they fought, their great inferiority in numbers would have rendered the issue but for a short time doubtful, had not an interposition, in which the hand of Heaven was supposed to be visible, given an unexpected turn to the fortunes of the day. On the very first onset of the combatants there appeared a holy man, or hermit, among the ranks, who regardless of the dangers that surrounded him, raised his voice in bold and awful denunciations of the impious wrong of which Fergall and his people were guilty, in violating the engagement entered into by his predecessor to abolish the Boarian tribute for ever. Seized with a panic at these denouncements, the royal army almost unresistingly gave way; the monarch himself, with his select body-guards, to the number of 160 knights, were among the slain; and, of the two armies, no less than 7000, among whom Tigernach§ reckons 200 kings, were among the number slaughtered on that day. A. D. 722.

Of the system of policy established in Ireland, from the earliest periods of her history, some account has been given in a preceding part of this work.‖ But a few farther remarks, suggested by the events to which we are hastening, will enable the reader to understand more clearly their precise character and course. The nature of the quintuple division of the island, in ancient times, has been variously and somewhat confusedly represented. It may be collected, however, to have been a sort of pentarchy, in which, in addition to the four great provinces of Leinster, Ulster, Munster, and Connaught, was included, as a fifth province, the district called Meath;¶ which, though belonging naturally to Leinster, was set apart, on account of its position in the centre of the kingdom, to form the seat of the monarchy. The limited extent of this portion, as compared with the four other principalities, was supposed to be compensated as well by its commanding position and superior fertility, as by the ample supplies and tributes which, in his capacity of supreme ruler, the King of Tara was entitled to receive from the subordinate princes. In the course of time, however, it was found expedient to extend the limits of the royal domain; and a tract of land taken from each of the other provinces was added to the original territory, forming altogether the country now called Meath and West Meath, with the addition, probably, of a great portion of the present King's County.

The want of a controlling power and influence in the monarchy, as regarded its relations with the provincial governments, had been always an anomaly in the Irish scheme of polity productive of weakness, insubordination, and confusion; and this source of evil, at the time of the irruption of the Danes, had, by a number of concurrent circumstances, been increased. As some modification of the evils of an elective monarchy, measures

* A. D. 693. See p. 144, of this Work.

† IV. Mag. ad ann. 718. (Æræ Com. 722.)

‡ See c. vii. p. 81, of this Work.

§ Ad ann. 722. For a similar prodigality of the regal title among the Carthaginians, see Larcher upon Herodotus, *Polymn.*

‖ Chap. ix. p. 96.

¶ According to some authorities, among whom is Giraldus Cambrensis, the quintuple number of the provinces was made out by the division of Munster into two, North and South, which, together with the other three provinces, Ulster, Connaught, and Leinster, constituted, they say, the Pentarchy. Dr. O'Connor pronounces Meath to have been a *sixth* portion, adding, somewhat nationally, "Talis fuit Hibernorum *Pentarchia*."—*Prol.* 2. 59.

The omission of Meath by Giraldus, in his quintuple division of the kingdom, is thus strongly objected to by Lynch:—"Divisio regni a Giraldo instituta, cum ei Mediam inserere omisit manca est et mutila . . . . . Media vero, cum extrà provinciarum allarum fines posita et nullius in Hibernia Regis, nisi Monarchæ solius imperiis obnoxia sit, ut unum Pentarchiæ regnum à ceteris sejunctum per se constituat necesse est."—*Cambrens. Evers.*

had been taken, as we have seen, in the reigns of Hugony and Tuathal,* to confirm the right of succession to one royal family only. The frequent intrusion, however, of usurpers among the successors of these monarchs, shows how little even the strong feeling of the Irish in favour of the legitimate blood could avail against the blind zeal of popular factions, and the reckless ambition of the provincial chiefs. Far more successful, in his provisions for the descent of the monarchy, was the great O'Niell of the Nine Hostages; whose will, bequeathing his hereditary possessions to the descendants of his eight sons, was adhered to with such remarkable fidelity, that, for more than 500 years, with but one single exception, all the monarchs of Ireland were chosen from the Hy-Niell race. Through the very same causes, however, by which the power of this illustrious house was perpetuated, it was also weakened and divided. In providing for his innumerable royal descendants such means of aggrandizement,† both in the north and in the south, he was, as it were, launching so many brands of discord into future times; for the four great families, or clans, into which, under the denominations of North Hy-Niells and South Hy-Niells, his posterity was subdivided, never ceased to disturb the kingdom by their conflicting pretensions, rendering the contests for the crown as stormy as its possession was insecure. And thus the discord and mutual enmity of the kindred clans who enjoyed a right to the succession, were added to the jealous and hostile feelings of those who were by law excluded from it.

Besides these fertile sources of weakness and division, the monarchy had also to cope with a rival power in the provincial kingdom of Munster; a power, the foundation of which had been laid in earlier ages, but which had now for a long time been growing formidable to the weakened throne of Tara,‡ and at last usurped upon it, to the utter overthrow of the old Tuathalian constitution.§ The origin of this kingdom in Munster, which extended over the greater part of the south of Ireland, is to be sought in that ancient division of the island into two equal parts, northern and southern, called Leath Con, or Con's Half, and Leath Mogh, or Mogh's Half.‖ The greater portion of the territory included in this latter moiety constituted the kingdom of Munster; and this kingdom was again subdivided into two principalities, North and South Munster, which, by the will of Olill-Ollum, an acient king of the province, were bequeathed to the descendants of his two eldest sons, Eogan and Cormac Cas. From the former, whose kingdom of Desmond, or South Munster, comprehended the present counties of Waterford, Cork, and Kerry, the people of these districts were called Eoganacths, or Eugenians; while from Cas, whose descendants held, as their patrimony, Thomond, or North Munster,—including the counties of Clare, Limerick, and the country about Cashel, as far as the mountains of Sliablama in Ossory,—the people of this principality derived the name so memorable in Irish warfare, of Dalgais, or Dalcassians. By an arrangement, complex, and, like most other of the rules of succession in Ireland, pregnant with the seeds of strife, it was settled that the crown of all Munster, or Leath Mogh, should be enjoyed alternately by these two kindred families; and that, while one exercised its turn of dominion over the whole province, the other was to rule only over that portion which formed its own separate patrimony. For instance, when the Eugenians succeeded to their alternate right of giving a sovereign to Leath Mogh, the Dalcassians were confined to their principality of Thomond, or North Munster; and, in like manner, when it came to the latter family to furnish the sovereign of Leath Mogh, the Eugenians relapsed into their subordinate state of kings, or dynasts, of South Munster.

* See chap. vii. pp. 73. 77, of this Work.

† "His (Niell's) posterity, the Hy-Niells, or Nelideans, distinguished into South and North, were descended from his eight sons, four of whom remained in Meath, which, by a decree of King Tuathal, belonged always to the reigning monarch, until it was divided among the sons of King Niell. The other four went to Ulster."—*O'Flaherty Ogygia*, part iii. c. 85. In the same place, he gives an account of the different territories assigned respectively to the eight sons.

‡ The first encroachment of the power of Munster on the rights of the monarchy was the act of Olliol-Olim, an early king of that province, in forcing the princes and states of Leinster to pay to him, instead of to the monarch, the fine, or mulct, called the Tribute of *Eidirsgeol*, which had been imposed upon them by the monarch, Conary More. In the Psalter of Cashell, as cited in those Munster annals from which Vallancey drew his materials, it is said, of Luig Meann, a successor of Olliol-Olim, that he was not only King of Leath Mogh, but was considered equal to the monarch of Ireland in power and influence over the natives.

§ To such a height had the power of the Kings of Munster attained, at the time when the Leabhar na Cceart, or Book of Rights, was drawn up (*Transact. of the Iberno-Celtic Society*, art. *St. Benin*,) that, as appears from that curious document, they then assumed a right, which had been exercised originally only by the monarch, of subsidising and demanding tribute from the other pentarchs and provincial princes. Vallancey himself, who has traced historically the progress of the power of this province, yet seems unable to believe in its assumption of such rights: "which subsidies, however (he says,) I do not suppose to have been given or received as a mark of superiority in the King of Munster over the other pentarchs."—*Law of Tanistry illustrated.*

‖ "The bounds fixed between these two halves (says Vallancey) were from Athcliath na Mearuidhe, now called Clarin's Bridge, near Galway, to the ridge of mountains called Eisgir-Riada, on which Cluainmacnoise and Cluainiraad are situated, and so on to Dublin."—*Law of Tanistry illustrated.*

I have been anxious to explain clearly, even at the risk of falling into tediousness, the complex nature of the form of government by which the affairs of this province were administered, both because it affords a striking instance of the mode in which kingship was, in those times, subdivided and complicated, and because, from the prominent part taken by the princes of Munster, in most of the transactions about to be narrated, some knowledge of the territorial relations of these dynasts to each other is absolutely necessary towards a clear understanding of the course of the general history.

While such as has been just described was the complex system by which that moiety of the island called Leath Mogh was governed, the control over the northern portion, or Leath Cuinn, was all that remained,—and, in some respects but nominally remained,—in the hands of the monarch, whose power of asserting his supreme rights, or even of maintaining the decent dignity of the crown, had been, from other causes, considerably diminished at this period. Those royal demesnes which, under the designation of the Mensal Lands of the House of Tara, had been, in early times, set apart for the support of the monarchy, were again, after the lapse of a few centuries, diverted from that purpose; and, at last, the district of Meath itself, the ancient appendant to the crown, came to be partly, if not entirely, severed from it,* leaving little more, perhaps, of the original royal demesnes than the lands immediately surrounding Temora, or Tara. To Niell the Great, as we have seen, the mischievous policy which dictated this dismemberment of the royal territory, is to be attributed;—that prince having parcelled out the state lands, in order to provide for and aggrandize some of those numerous branches of the Hy-Niell race, both northern and southern, which had then spread themselves over the whole island, weakening that noble stock by their diffusion.

Among the various other causes, therefore, which had combined, at this crisis, to enfeeble the Irish monarchy, and adduce a power, at all times more imposing than efficient, to little better than a mere shadow of sovereignty, is to be numbered this diminution of his fiscal resources,—leaving no other support for the maintenance of the regal power and state, than in those contributions and military supplies derived from the provincial princes, and furnished in general with a feeling of reluctance which only force could overcome.

From the foregoing statements, though too much partaking, I fear, of the inherent complexity of their subject, it may be collected that the government of Ireland, though originally a pentarchy, and still nominally retaining that form,† had, by the course of events, become divided into two great rival sections, or kingdoms, between which a struggle was, at the period we have now reached, carrying on, which ended in the triumph of the throne of Munster, and the downfal of Tara's ancient dynasty.

The name of the monarch who filled the throne at the time when the Northmen made their first serious incursions was Aidus, or Aedan, a son of the king Niell Trasach; and during his long reign the incursions of these pirates increased in frequency and violence.‡ Landing on the north-west coast of Ireland, they penetrated as far as Roscommon, laying waste all the surrounding country, and giving to the inhabitants of the interior their first bitter foretaste of the desolation and misery that were yet in store for them. The ravagers, previously to this expedition, had twice visited the sainted island of Iona, and, with that feeling of hatred to all connected with Christianity which marked their fierce career, had set fire to the monastery of Icolumbkill, and caused a great number of its holy inmates to perish in the flames. The results of their second attack were no less disastrous; and but a small proportion, it is said, of the monks of that famous fraternity were left alive. Whatever spot, indeed, had been most distinguished by popular reverence, thither these spoilers bent their course. Even the small island, Inis-Patrick, the supposed residence of the Irish apostle, did not escape their unholy rage;§ and an Irish geographer of that period,‖ in describing the waste and desolation

A. D. 795.

* Proofs of this separation of Meath from the monarchy occur continually in the annals of the eighth and ninth centuries. Thus, *Annal. Ult. ad an.* 863, we are told that Lorcan, the King of Meath, was deprived of his eyes by Aodh, King of Temora, i. e. the monarch. In the IV. Mag. *ad an.* 769, another monarch of the same name is stated to have divided Meath between the two sons of his royal predecessor, Donchad. Meath itself, indeed, appears to have been partitioned in these times into almost incredibly small principalities, as we find not only kings for the two chief divisions of that district, namely, North Brigia and South Brigia, but even a "king of *the half* of South Bregia."—*Annal. Ult. ad an.* 814.

"Hy-Niellia (South,) another name for the whole territory of Meath, after it was possessed by the posterity of Neill-Mor, King of Ireland, and was divided into many inferior territories."—*Ware.*

† Thus, in Annal. IV. Mag. ad ann. 836, Connaught is called the fifth part, *Choicc*, or *Coige*. "This word," says O'Brien, "being prefixed to the names of the five different provinces of Ireland, as they are esteemed each a fifth part of the kingdom, though they are not all of equal extent."—*in voce, Coige.*

‡ Ware, *Antiq.* chap. xxiv. ad ann. 807.

§ *Annals of Ulster*, ap. Johnstone, *Antiq. Scando-Celt.*

‖ Dicuil, who flourished in the latter part of the eighth and beginning of the ninth century. His geographical work is entitled, "A Survey of the Provinces of the Earth."

they left behind them, says, that, in many of the smaller islands of these seas, not even a hermit was to be found.

At length rousing themselves from the state of panic and dismay into which visitations so new and alarming had at first thrown them, the natives ventured to front their A. D. 810. invaders in the field; and, in two or three instances, with complete success. In the year 810 the annals of Ulster record a slaughter of the Gâls, or foreigners, in that province. The year following, they are said to have been defeated by an army of Thomonians, under the "king of the Lake of Killarney;" and, in 812, a sanguinary battle took place, of sufficient importance to be mentioned by foreign chroniclers,* one of whom states that the Northmen, after losing a considerable part of their force, were compelled to betake themselves to a disgraceful flight, and return to their own country.

Among those usurpations on the historical fame of the Irish, which, under cover of the ambiguous title of Scots, their descendants in North Britain have so often and dexterously practised, must be numbered the claim set up by Scottish antiquarians to the honour of an alliance of some kind, at this period, between one of their kings and Charlemagne;† whereas, it was with Ireland that this league, whatever may have been its extent or object, was formed,—the name of Scotia not having been extended to the Irish settlement of Albany for nearly two centuries after this period. We have already seen by how many learned and eminent Irishmen the schools of France and Italy were, in the reign of Charlemagne, adorned; and it appears from a passage in the life of that prince by Eginhart,‡ that, in addition to this literary intercourse, some understanding also of a political nature had been at that time entered into between France and Ireland. In referring to instances of the extended fame of Charlemagne, his secretary says, "So devoted to his will had he rendered the kings of the Scots, by his munificence, that they never addressed him otherwise than as their lord, and declared themselves his faithful subjects and vassals." He adds, that there were letters extant, addressed by these kings to the emperor, in which their submission and allegiance were in express terms announced. There is yet another proof adduced of this alliance, which, if not convincing, is at least curious. We know that the historians of the Norman conquest have found materials for their task in the tapestry of Bayeux; and, in like manner, a confirmation of the account of this league between Charlemagne and the Irish has been sought for in an ancient piece of tapestry at Versailles, where the King of Ireland is represented as standing in a row of princes all in amity with Charlemagne, and is drawn, as a mark of distinction, with the Irish harp by his side.§

Constant as was the state of alarm in which these incursions had kept every part of the kingdom, still this harassing scourge from without had no effect whatever in suspending their mutual animosities within. Twice in one month, as we are told by the annalists, the lands of the Lagenians, or people of Leinster, were laid waste by the monarch;—the resistance made by them to the old Boarian tax being assigned as the cause of this infliction;—though it seems even then to have been felt how disgraceful and melancholy was all this waste of the national strength in discord, as a verse cited by the Four Masters says, in reference to a battle fought on one of these occasions, "The poet sung not the slaughter of that field, for he came away from it with sadness in his heart."‖

It was in proceeding upon one of these expeditions against Leinster that an occurrence is recorded to have taken place, affecting materially the discipline and privileges of the Irish clergy. According to the practice, for some time prevalent in Ireland, of

* Rhegino, Hermannus Contractus, Eginhart. The last of these chroniclers thus records the event:—"Classis Nordmannorum Hiberniam, Scotorum insulam, aggressa, commissoque cum Scotis prælio, parte non modicâ Nordmannorum interfectâ, turpiter fugiendo domum reversa est."

† To their king, Eocha IV., or Achaius, the Scotch attributed this league; and the double tressure in the Scottish arms was supposed to have originated in the event. But one of their own countrymen, Lord Hailes, and, before him, a learned German, Schoepflen, have abundantly exposed the utter groundlessness of the pretension. See Pinkerton, also, on the subject, *Inquiry*, part iv. c. v. "It is certain," says this writer, in another part of the same work, "that the Irish alone are the Scots of Eginhart, and that the correspondence he mentions between Charlemagne and the reges Scottorum, King of the Scots, refers solely to Ireland. That emperor procured learned men from Ireland, but did not probably know even of the existence of the Dalreudini, or British Scots."

‡ "Scotorum quoque Reges sic habuit ad suam voluntatem per suam munificentiam inclinatos, ut eum nusquam aliter, quam dominum seque subditos ac servos ejus pronuntiarent. Extant Epistolæ ab eis ad illum missæ, quibus hujusmodi affectus eorum erga illum indicatur."—Eginhart, *de Vit. et Gest. Carol. Magni.*

§ Kennedy, *Genealog. Stuart.* That there existed a tradition of some of the Irish kings having made their appearance at the court of Charlemagne, seems not improbable, from the introduction of Oberto, "il re d'Ibernia," by Ariosto, and the account he gives of this young Irish prince having been brought up in France.—*Orlando Furioso*, canto xi. 61.

‖ IV. Mag. ad. ann. 799.

"Ni ran an tetri tad cach, con do farcaibh im brogh nu."

summoning bishops and abbots to attend the kings in their martial enterprises, the monarch, on the present occasion, was accompanied by Conmach, archbishop of Armagh, and the abbot Fothadius; the latter of whom, on account of his great knowledge of the canons of the church, was called Fothadius de Canonibus. Arrived on the frontiers of Leinster, the clergy in attendance having represented to the monarch how great was the injury to ecclesiastical discipline arising from the custom of requiring persons of their profession to attend on military expeditions, besought, for themselves and their successors, an exemption from the duty. The king, appealing to the authority of Fothadius, professed himself ready to abide wholly by his decision;* and that learned canonist, having drawn up a treatise in favour of the claims of the clergy, of which the title alone is preserved,† they were declared to be thenceforth exempt from all military service. A. D. 799.

CHAPTER XVI.

Traditions of the Northmen respecting Ireland.—Achievements of the Sea-king, Ragnar Lodbrog.—Arrival of Turgesius with a large fleet in Ireland.—Hatred of the Northmen to Christianity.—Persecution of the Saxons, its cause.—Reign of the Monarch Concobar.—Depredations of the Danes.—Dissensions of the Irish among themselves.—Life and Triumphs of Feidlim, King of Munster.—Death of Turgesius, and expulsion of the Foreigners.

THOUGH the Northmen had been taught by those frequent and signal defeats, which at length forced them to quit the country, that they had an enemy to deal with of no ordinary stamp, and who wanted but concert and coalition to be unconquerable, they had been also, on the other side, made too fully acquainted with the disunited state of the people among themselves to abandon the hope of being able ultimately to master them. They were likewise sensible, it is clear, of the weakening effects of their own scattered mode of warfare. Acting in detached expeditions, each under its own separate chief, there was wholly wanting among them that concentration of means which alone produces great and permanent effects; nor had any names sufficiently eminent to descend to posterity been as yet placed at the head of their rude desultory enterprises.

Among the adventures told of their romantic hero, Ragnar Lodbrog, it is related that, after a series of victories in England, he carried his arms into Ireland; where, having slain the king of that country, whose name, as given by the Danish historians, was Maelbric, he honoured Dublin for a whole year with his heroic presence.‡ In the famous Death-Song,§ attributed to this champion, his adventures in Ireland are, with peculiar pride commemorated;—his combat with "Marstein, Erin's king, who, whelmed by the iron-sleet, allayed the hunger of the eagle and wolf;" his "stubborn struggle against three kings in Leinster, when few, we are told, "went joyous from the conflict;" and when "Erin's blood, streaming from the decks, flowed on the deep beneath."‖

These romantic accounts of the great northern heroes resemble, in so far, the ancient

* *Annal. ult. ad an.* 803. From a circumstance related with reference to this treatise of Fothadius, it is concluded that Ængus, the martyrologist, was his contemporary. The latter having lent, as we are told, his metrical works to Fothadius, the canonist returned the compliment by communicating to the poet his own Treatise on the Rights of the Clergy. (*Rer. Hib. Script. Ep. Nunc.*) The name of Ængus, however, appears to have been common to more than one hagiologist about this period; and hence arises some confusion as to their respective dates.

† *Opusculum pro Cleri defensione et immunitate.*

‡ "Cumque in Anglia annum victor exegisset, arma in Hiberniam transtulit; occisoque insulæ rege Melbrico per integrum annum Dublini commoratus est."—*Torfæus*, lib. iii. c. 10. Thus, too, in another of the Danish historians, it is said of Lodbrog, "Post hoc in Hiberniam arma movit cujus rege occiso Dubliniam civitatem obsedit et cæpit."—Thomas Gheysmer, *Compend. Hist. Dan.* See also Langebek's *Script. Rer. Danic.* for the *Chronicon. Erici Regis*, and the *Chronicle of Peter Olaus*, in both of which the same fable is, in much the same terms, repeated. The original source, however, of all these fictions respecting Ragnar's Irish adventures, is to be found in Saxo Grammaticus, lib. ix.

§ *Lodbrokar Quida*, translated by the Rev. James Johnstone.

‖ "The fertile Erin was long the great resort of the Scandinavians, who, from the internal dissensions of the natives, gained considerable footing. They, however, met with a stubborn resistance. Hence, the Islandic authors represent the Irish as most profuse of life, and the *Ira far* was no less terrible to the sons of Lochlin, than the 'furor Normannorum' to the rest of Europe. Some of the Norwegian kings were fond of imitating the Irish manners, and one of them could speak no language perfectly but the Celtic. Several Runic pillars are inscribed to Swedes who fell in Erin."—*Lodbrokar Quida. Note by the Translator.*

Greek traditions, that they may be depended upon for the reality of the events which they relate far more than for that of the personages to whom they attribute them: and, in like manner as the genius of Grecian fable has collected round the head of one deified Hercules the scattered glory of various achievements performed by different heroes at different periods, so in the northern Sages and songs, for the purpose of glorifying one great national champion, events that chronology would have widely separated, tradition has, without scruple, brought together; and the single life of their royal sea-rover, Ragnar Lodbrog, is made to condense within its compass the achievements of many a heroic career, spread over a long tract of time.* In a similar way, the adventures celebrated in the supposed Death-Song of the same hero, are probably but a series of poetical glimpses of the Danish warfare in these seas, and therefore little to be trusted as authority for the actual agency of Ragnar himself in those scenes.

It is clear that the Danes had, up to this period, considered Ireland but as a temporary field for their depredations; and the bitter hatred of the Christian creed, which so strongly marked their whole career, could not have been gratified more appropriately than in thus desolating a country which had become so distinguished for Christian zeal, as to have been styled by the nations of Europe the Island of Saints. When they came to be acquainted, however, with the interior of the kingdom, and saw all its means and resources, experienced the mildness of the climate, and the great fertility of the soil, it was natural that a wish for the permanent possession of so fine a country should arise forcibly in their minds; and the scale of their subsequent expeditions to its shores evinced a resolution to see that wish accomplished. They were fully, it is evident, aware, that a more extended and combined plan of invasion was now called for, as well by the difficulty as by the value of the conquest. Accordingly, about the year 815, as the common accounts state, but, according to other authorities, later in the century, the Norwegian chief, Turges, or Turgesius, arriving with a large fleet of ships and a considerable force, made a descent upon this island; and having succeeded, no less through the treacherous alliance of the Irish themselves than by means of reinforcements poured in from the north, in establishing settlements on the coasts, continued, through thirty long years of tyranny and persecution, to retain possession of the country.

In addition to the naturally fierce character of these Scandinavians, and their habitual recklessness of the lives of others, as well as of their own, they were also stung into still more savage animosity against those countries in which Christianity flourished, by the remembrance, still fresh in the hearts of themselves and their fellow Northmen, of the cruelties inflicted on them by professed champions of that creed:† and such a visitation, following so quick upon the wrong,—even where, as in this case, the penalty lights upon the innocent,—is one of those dispensations full of warning to the world, as showing that the bolt of offended justice will fall somewhere; and thus rendering responsible, by a sort of frank-pledge, the whole community of nations for all such outbreaks of violence, civil or religious, in any one of its members, as may be likely to lead to so desperate and indiscriminate a reaction.

It is to be recollected that, from kindred descent, similarity of language, and long habits of confederation, the Danes, or Normans,‡ and the Saxons, were become as one

* Thus, while in some of these northern histories it is said that Ragnar was killed in Ireland in the ninth century, others state that one of his sons was the first founder of the city of London. "Quin si vera sunt (says Torfæus) quæ nostrates de conditâ per Lodbrochis filium urbe Londinensi referunt, istum Lodbrochem a duobus aliis diversum esse oportet." Lib. iii. c. 12. The confusion that has arisen between the Ragnar Lodbrog of romance, and a chief of the same name supposed to have flourished in the ninth century, is explained thus by Mallet:—"A l'égard des autres merveilleuses aventures que Saxon met sur le compte de ce prince, il faut observer que selon toutes les apparences, elles doivent appartenir en grande partie à un autre Regner également surnommé Lodbrog, qui n'a vecu que vers la fin du neuvième siècle, et qui n'a jamais regné à Danemarc, quoiqu 'il descendit peut-être du roi ce nom."

† The open avowal of the persecuting spirit, in the following monkish verses, cited by Mallet from the *Accessiones Historiæ* of Leibnitz, amounts, in its boldness, almost to the sublime:—

"Hinc statuit requies illis (*Saxonibus*) ut nulla daretur
Donec, Gentili cultu rituque relicto,
Christicolæ fierent, aut delerentur in ævum.
O pietas benedicta Deo!
Sicque vel invitos salvari cogeret ipsos."

‡ I have preferred using, in general, the term Danes, as being at once precise and sufficiently comprehensive. The term Ostmen, employed by so many of the writers on Irish history, is of comparatively recent introduction, and not found in any of our native annals. In Johnstone's Extracts, indeed from the Annals of Ulster, the Danes are called Ostmen (*ad an.* 799,) but without any authority from the text.

A distinction between Danes and Normans is thus drawn by M. Thierry:—"Appelés Danois ou Normands selon qu'ils vénoient des isles de la mer Baltique ou de la côte montagneuse de Norwège."—*Hist. de la Conquete de l'Angleterre.* "The Northmen," says Sir F. Palgrave, "whom our historians usually term Danes, were Anglo-Saxons under another name."

people. In the nominally Saxon conquest of Britain, the majority of those who achieved it were Danes;—the Angles and Jutes having been tribes of that people from Jutland, and the present Duchy of Sleswick.* But, among the ties that so closely connected and almost identified the nations of the north with each other, the very strongest, perhaps, was their common religion; and the same fidelity to their ancient gods, which the brave Saxons preserved unbroken through a long struggle of thirty years against the armies of Charlemange, was equally felt and responded to along all the shores of the Baltic. Already one King of Denmark had taken up arms in aid of their national cause; at the court of another, their hero, Wittikind, had, in the intervals of his glorious bursts against their oppressor, found shelter and counsel; and when every effort proved unavailing, and the doom of Saxony was finally sealed, to the Danes fell the tremendous task of taking vengeance for her sufferings, not merely on France itself, but on almost every Christian kingdom of Europe. The dominant feeling in all their ravages, was evidently hatred to the creed of their country's despoilers; and the blood of priests,† and the plunder of churches, were in all places their most powerful incentives and rewards. In the songs describing their murderous forays, it was said, with bitter mockery, "We chaunted the Mass of lances with the uprising sun;"‡ and the proudest boast of some of their chieftains was, that they had stabled their horses in the chapels of kings.§

There have been found writers so much under the influence, some of the religious, some of the heroic, qualities of Charlemange, as to have attempted not merely to palliate, but even to vindicate the atrocious measures resorted to by him for the forcible subjection of the Saxons to his own creed and yoke. But Religion herself abhors such modes of advancing her temporal triumphs; and how little the result can be pleaded in favour of this method of propagating truth, appears convincingly from the fact, that, of all the Gothic nations, the Scandinavians were the very last to embrace the Christian creed.

Of the Norwegian chief, Turgesius, who, at the beginning of the ninth century, commenced his oppressive and desolating dominion in Ireland, not a vestige is to be found under this name in any of the northern chroniclers. An effort has been made, indeed, as if in rivalry of the gross anachronisms of the Sagas, to identify him with a prince named Thorgils,‖ who is said by Snorro to have reigned in Dublin, but whose father, Harold Harfager, according to the same authority, was not born till many years after Turgesius died.¶ The name, whatever may have been its Scandinavian reading, continued to be long after in use among the Danes of Ireland; as we find, in the eleventh century, an Ostman Bishop, who assisted at the synod convened at Kells by cardinal Paparo, bearing the name of Torgesius.

In the year 818, the monarch Aodh, after a reign of fifteen years' duration, was succeeded by Concobar, or Connor, son of Donchad. A circumstance recorded among the minor events of the former reign, shows with what reverence, even in the midst of scenes so stormy and calamitous, all that related to the power and immunities of the church was

* "On sait que les Angles et les Jutes, qui partagèrent avec les Saxons l'honneur de cette conquête, étoient des peuples Danois sortis de la Jutlande et du Sleswick."—*Mallet, Introduct.*

† "Clerici et monachi crudelius damnabantur."—*Script. Rer. Norman.* ‡ Lodbrokar Quida.

§ "Hic (Ragner) per xi. annos urbes Franciæ vastavit, et Parisiis veniens in ecclesia S. Germani et Aquisgrani in palatio Imperatoris stabulum equorum fecit."—*Chronic. Erici.*

For professedly historical details, respecting Ragnar, see *Hist. of Anglo-Saxons*, book 3. c. 4. In spite of the efforts of Mr. Turner to invest this phantom with a substance, the personal identity of Ragnar Lodbrog must still continue to evade the grasp of history.

I may take this opportunity of observing that, having followed Mr. Turner through most of his northern authorities, for the purpose of gleaning such scattered notices as might be found in them respecting Ireland, I am in so far qualified to bear humble testimony to the diligence and accuracy with which his valuable historical materials have been collected.

‖ One of Ledwich's crude and self-sufficient conjectures. In a long note upon the "Vita S. Elphegi, a Danish Martyr," Langebek has entered into an elaborate inquiry on the subject of Thorkill, or Torkill; but, among the various chiefs of that name whom he enumerates, does not once glance at the possibility of any one of them being the same with the Turgesius of Ireland. That the original name, however, of this tyrant might have been Thorgills, or Thorkill, in his own country, the same learned authority thus intimates:—"Turgesius annr. 815. 835. 845., Norwegus forte, cujus nomen in patria Thurgils sive Thorkillus."—*Note on the Genealog. Stirp. Reg. Dan. Suo. Anscharium.*

¶ Both in England, and, it is said, also in Ireland, some strange traditions were for a long time preserved, respecting a personage named Gurmundus, the son of an African prince, of whose achievements, in both countries, many wonders are related. See Giraldus Cambrensis (*Topograph. Hib. Dist.* iii. c. 38, 39, 40.,) who has been guilty of the absurd anachronism of making this Gurmundus a contemporary of the British king, Careticus, who flourished about A. D. 586, and yet, at the same time, supposing him to have acted under Turgesius, and to have been sent by that chief as his lieutenant to Ireland. The reader will find all that needs to be known on this subject in Usher (*Eccles. Primord.* p. 568.,) who attempts to trace to the traditions respecting Gurmundus, the names of some of the streets of Dublin, as well as those of Grange-Gorman, Gormanstown, &c. &c. The name Gormo, applied by Usher to this chief ("Gormonis sive Gurmundi,") rather strengthens the conjecture respecting him which I find in a northern authority, though still leaving the chronology as irreconcileable as ever.—"Anno Domini 738, Gormo I., Haraldi filius, Biornonis nepos, regnat annos 33. Hic à Sylvestri Giraldo Cambrensi Gurmundus et ipsius legatus rerum bellicarum Torchillus Turchesius appellari videtur."—*Hemsfortii Chronologia.*

regarded. In the year 806*, say the annalists, a violent interruption of the Taltine Sports took place, owing to the seizure and retention, by the monks of Tallagh, of the monarch's chariot horses:—this step having been taken by them in consequence of the violation of their free territory by the O'Niells. It is added, that ample reparation was made to the monastery of Tallagh, as well as gifts in addition bestowed upon it by the king.

The first year of the monarch Concobar's reign was distinguished by an event so marvellously peaceful in its character, so widely departing from the natural course of affairs in Ireland, as to be attributed by the Four Masters to "a miracle of God." A. D. 818. In consequence of some factious feud, the immediate cause of which is not specified, an army of the O'Niells of the north, commanded by Murtach, son of Maildun, marched in battle array to meet, on the plain near the Hill of the Horse, an army of southern O'Niells, led by the new monarch Concobar. But, no sooner had these two hostile forces come face to face, than each army, at the same moment, turned away from the other, and, without a drop of blood spilt, or even a blow exchanged, separated.†

The history of the proceedings of the Danes in Ireland, during the long and afflicting tyranny of Turgesius, presents but one dark and monotonous picture of plunder, massacre, and devastation; and though for thirty years the whole island may be said to have groaned under their yoke, it is plain that the footing they had acquired was not without much difficulty maintained. In the very amount and long continuance of their cruelties, we find a proof of the constant resistance they experienced; since not even fiends could so long have persisted in the persecution of a quelled and submissive people. Their frequent plunder of the same shrines, and destruction of the same monasteries, shows at once the religious zeal of the natives, who were constantly repairing and rebuilding these holy places, and the persecuting industry of their oppressors, who were as constantly employed in destroying them. The monastery of Banchor, which could boast at one period of no less than 3000 monks observing its rule, and from whose schools those two remarkable men, St. Columba, and the heresiarch, Pelagius, were sent forth,—this celebrated monastery, which had been once before the object of their fury, was now again despoiled and plundered by these ravagers;‡ who, having broken open the rich shrine of its founder, St. Comgall, wantonly scattered about the relics that were there enclosed. On this latter occasion the venerable abbot, and, it is said, 900 monks, were all murdered in one day

The seat of the primacy, Armagh, appears to have been, more frequently than any other place, the object of their attacks;§ owing, most probably, to the wealth collected in that city from the annual tribute sent thither under the Law of St. Patrick. Nor would the richly decorated tomb and pictured walls of Kildare have attracted so frequently the visits of these plunderers, did it not likewise present some temptations of the same substantial kind. Wherever pilgrims in great numbers resorted, thither the love at once of slaughter and of plunder led these barbarians to pursue them. The monastery of the English at Mayo; the holy isle of Iniscathy, in the mouth of the Shannon; the cells of St. Kevin, in the valley of Glendalough; the church of Slane, the memorable spot where St. Patrick first lighted the Paschal fire;‖ the monastery of the Seelig Isles, on the coast of Kerry, a site of the ancient well-worship; all these, and a number of other such seats of holiness, are mentioned as constantly being made the scenes of the most ruthless devastation.

It would not have been wonderful if, by such an uninterrupted course of oppression and cruelty, the spirit of the people had been as much broken and subdued as was that of the English, by the same scourge, at a later period. But, throughout the whole of this long course of persecution the Irish had never, it is plain, ceased to resist; and, on more than one occasion during this reign, we find them resisting with success. In repelling A. D. 826. an invasion of their province by the Danes, the brave Ultonians, commanded by 827. Lethlobar, King of Dalaradia, gained a decisive victory; and, at the same period, Carbry, King of Hy-Kinsellagh, was, in an encounter with these foreigners, equally successful.¶ Could the contentions of the Irish princes among themselves have been, even for a short time, suspended, the galling yoke under which all equally suffered might have been broken. But the curse of discord was then, as it has been ever, upon

* Annal. IV. Mag. The Annals of Ulster place this event in the year 810.
† IV. Mag. ad ann. 818.
‡ Annal. IV. Mag. and Annal. Ult. ad an. 823.
§ Its first time of devastation was in 830.
‖ See chap. x. p. 115, of this Work.
¶ Annal. IV. Mag. and Annal. Ult. ad an. 826, 827.

this land;* and, in selfish struggles between rival factions, the cause of the common country of all was sacrificed. It is, indeed, lamentable to have to record, that the prince who shines at this period most prominently in our annals, is one whose renown had been all acquired by victories over his own countrymen; and of whom not a single hostile movement against the common foe is recorded.†

This selfishly ambitious ruler was the renowned Feidlim, King of Cashel; and a brief sketch of his bold unprincipled career will show that, in addition to what Ireland had to suffer from her tormenting invaders, she was also cursed with rival tormentors within her own bosom.

The extent of power attained by the provincial throne of Munster comprising in its range almost the whole of the southern moiety of Ireland, has already been fully shown; as well as the manner in which the succession to this throne was shared alternately by the Eugenian and Dalcassian princes. It was shortly after the landing of Turgesius, that Feidlim Mac-Crimthan, by right of his Eugenian descent, came into possession of the crown of Cashel; and his course from thenceforth was marked with the worst excesses of rude and lawless power. While, in one part of the country, the Northmen were, as we have seen, visiting with all the horrors of fire and sword‡ such devoted monasteries and religious houses as offered temptations to the spoiler, this Irish prince was to be found in another, pursuing zealously the same sacrilegious course. In many instances, too, the same holy communities which had served as victims to the rage of the foreign barbarians, were those selected for fresh ravage by their no less barbarous countrymen. Thus the monastery of Clonmacnois, which was one of those laid desolate by the Danes, had to experience a similar fate at the hands of the ruthless King Feidlim; who, besides burning all the lands of the abbey, "up to the church door,"§ put numbers of its holy inmates to death. In like manner,—except that, in this case, the native depredators had the first fruits of the spoil,—a party of the Danes attacked and devastated Kildare but a short time after it had been forcibly entered by King Feidlim, and the clergy carried off from thence in captivity along with his own slaves.

In this year (832–3) died the monarch Conquovar, after a reign of about fourteen years, and was succeeded on the throne by Niell Calne, son of Aodh Ornidhe.

It has been shown how immensely the power of the kings of Leath-Mogh had, in the course of time, gained upon that of the monarchy; and a stirring ambitious prince like Feidlim could not fail to advance still farther the usurpation. So daring were his inroads into the monarch's territory, that, on more than one occasion, the whole country from Birr to Tara, was laid waste by his arms. Having revived also the ancient and bitter feud between the provinces of Munster and Connaught, respecting their claims to the territory now called Clare, he gained, in the course of this contest, a sanguinary victory over an army of Conacians, led by the O'Niells; and it is recorded of him, as a double triumph, that, on the very same day when he received hostages from the princes
A. D. 839. of Connaught, he swept with his army over the rich plains of Meath, and seated himself proudly in the ancient precincts of Temora.‖ A council was held immediately after, at Clonmacnois, where Niell the monarch delivered to him hostages; and on that day, says the Munster annalist, Feidlim was supreme king of all Ireland. But his turbulent career was soon brought to a miserable end. A few years after these brilliant events, which a poet of his own times commemorated, he received, while devastating the lands of the abbey of St. Ciaran, a wound from the staff of the abbot, and, at the same time, a curse from the holy man's lips, of the effects of which he never after

* A writer, whom none can justly accuse of ill-will or unfairness towards his own countrymen, thus speaks of this lamentable stain on their historical character:—"Pendant qu'une partie de ce peuple se consacroit entièrement à Dieu par un renoncement parfait au monde, et servoit en cela de modèle aux nations voisines, l'esprit de discorde fut toujours nourri chez eux ..... ils étoient toujours armés les uns contre les autres, sans que l'évangile qu'ils venoient de recevoir avec tant de respect eût pu corriger cet esprit de discorde, qui fut cause de tant de désordres."—*Abbé MacGeoghegan, Hist. d'Irlande*, part 2. c. 4.

† One historian (O'Halloran, book x. c. 1,) attributes to this prince a successful attack upon the Danes, but without any authority for the assertion. The Polychronicon, indeed, states that, at the time when Turgesius landed, Feidhlim was king of Munster;—"tempore Feidmidii Norwegenses, duce Turgesio, terram hanc occuparunt,"—but of any conflict between this prince and the Danes, neither the Polychronicon nor any other records make mention.

‡ Cum ducibus solitis Marte et Vulcano.—*Bromton.*

§ The words of the annalist, "Go dorus a cille."—Annal. IV. Mag. ad an. 838.

‖ "Umhlacht do ionnas gur ab Ian Righ Eirionn an la sni e."—*Annal. Inisfall. ad ann.* 840. In this boast of the Munster annalist, originated, no doubt, the impression which led Giraldus to rank Feidlim among the monarchs of Ireland. "De gente igitur ista ab adventu Patricii usque ad Feimidii regis tempora 33 reges per 400 annos in Hibernia regnaverunt." See Archdall (*Monast. Hibern.*, at *Clonmacnoise*,) where, likewise on the authority of the Munster Annals, the same dignity is attributed to Feidlim.

¶ Annal. IV. Mag. ad an. 839, (840.) The annals of Inisfallen add that, in the course of this inroad he carried off Gormflatha, daughter of the King of Meath, together with all her handmaids.

recovered. Devoting the close of his days to penitence and the Church, he died in the following year;* and, in the very face of all the enormities which their own pages A. D. 846. have recorded of him, is described by his ecclesiastical historians as "the most religious and learned anchoret that Erin could boast in his day."†

In the year 837, a considerable addition had been made to the Danish force in Ireland;—two fleets from the Baltic, consisting altogether, it is said, of 120 sail, having arrived, one in the river Boyne, and the other in the Liffey; from whence, pouring forth their swarms over the plains through which these rivers flow, they inflicted on the already sacked and exhausted country new varieties of desolation and ruin. It was their custom to avail themselves of the facilities which the fine inland waters of Ireland afforded; being enabled, by means of light barks which they launched on the rivers and lakes, to penetrate far into the country, and, by sudden landings, take the unguarded and panic-struck natives by surprise.

To attempt to follow, through all its frightful details, the course of outrage and massacre which continued to be pursued by the bands of Turgesius throughout the remainder of that tyrant's turbulent life, would be a task as wearisome as revolting. Let it suffice, therefore, to state that there is not a single spot of renown in the ecclesiastical history of our country, not one of those numerous religious foundations, the seats and monuments of the early piety of her sons, that was not frequently, during this period, made the scene of the most fearful and brutal excesses. The repeated destruction by fire, year after year, of the same monasteries and churches, may naturally be accounted for by the material of these structures having been wood. But, as few things of any value could have survived such conflagrations, the mere wantonness of barbarity alone, could have tempted them so often to repeat the outrage. The devoted courage, however, of those crowds of martyrs who still returned undismayed to the same spot, choosing rather to encounter sufferings and death than leave the holy place untenanted, presents one of those affecting pictures of quiet heroism with which the history of the Christian church abounds.

Though, in their assaults upon religious houses, the Danes in general put most of the inmates to death, they in some cases carried off the chief ecclesiastics, either as hostages, or for the sake of ransom. Thus Farannan, the primate of Armagh, was, together with all the religious and students of the house, as well as the precious church relics, taken away to the Danish ships at Limerick;‡ and, at a somewhat later period, Maelcob, the Bishop of Armagh, and Mocteus, the Reader, were in like manner made prisoners by the invaders.

That the Northmen, in their first plundering incursions, may have found a quantity of gold and silver in Ireland, appears by no means improbable. Though coined money was not yet introduced among the natives,§ and the word "pecunia," which is often supposed to have implied coin, was employed in those days to express cattle and all other sorts of property, the use of the precious metals, in ingots, had long been generally known; and the ornaments of the shrines in which saintly relics were enclosed, appear to have been, in many instances valuable.‖ The tomb of St. Brigid, at Kildare, was overhung, we are told, with crowns of gold and silver;¶ and the relics of St. Columba, which the abbot of Iona removed for safety, in the year 830, to Ireland, are stated to have been enclosed in a shrine of gold.** The luxury of ornament, indeed, which we have reason to believe was bestowed on the illumination and covering of manuscripts at that period,†† would lead us to give credit to much of what is related of the richness of the utensils found in monasteries by the Danes.

The power which these foreigners had now so long exercised, owed clearly its consolidation and continuance to one single directing mind; and the standard raised by Turgesius, however uneasily and amidst constant conflict upheld, presented a rallying point, not merely to the multitude of Northmen already in the country, but to all such swarms of new adventurers as were from time to time attracted to its shores. To these

* Annal. IV. Mag. ad an. 845. (Ærse Com. 846.) *Rer. Hib.* tom i., *in Catal. Regum.*

† Annal. IV. Mag. The Chronicon Scotorum calls him "the last king of the Scots." M'Curtin quotes, for his flattering character of Feidhlim, the *Leabhar Irse*, or Book of Records.

‡ The Four Masters place this event in 843. Usher, *Ind. Chron.* 848.

§ Simon (*Essay on Irish Coins*) is of a different opinion; but having no authority in favour of his notion except the Sagas, his reasons are of but little weight.

‖ Shrines of gold and silver are mentioned in the Annals of Ulster, under the dates A. D. 799 and 800.

¶ Coronis aureis et argenteis desuper predentibus. Cogitosus, *de Vita S. Brigid*, a work which Vossius (*de Hist. Lat.* l. 3,) pronounces to be of great antiquity; but whether of so early a date as is assigned to it, namely, the sixth century, appears doubtful. See Ware, *Writers.*

** Rer. Hib. Scrip. tom. iv. p. 205, *note.*

†† For an account of the early manuscripts thus embellished, see Dr. O'Connor, *Ep. Nunc.*

fierce and hardy assailants, combined under one head, and having one common object, was opposed a brave but divided people, whose numerous leaders followed each his own personal interest or ambition; and who, from long habits of indiscriminate warfare, had almost lost the power of distinguishing between enemies and friends. Yet, notwithstanding all this, such was the unconquerable spirit of the Irish people, that while, about this very period, one of the fairest portions of France became the fief of the Northmen, and while England twice, in the course of a few centuries, passed tamely under their yoke, it was only during the short interval of the Turgesian persecution that their dominion can fairly be asserted to have prevailed over Ireland.

That upon the life of their able leader the power of the Danes in this country chiefly depended, is proved by the rapid dissolution of their union, and, consequently, strength, which succeeded immediately upon his death. The obscurity which A. D. 844. involves the details of this latter event has been turned to account by those ready and fluent historians who, when most stinted in facts, are then always most prodigal in details; and a story, briefly related by Cambrensis, respecting the circumstances which led to the Norse chief's death, has become amplified in this manner by successive historians, each adding some new grace or incident to the original tale. The following is the substance of the anecdote, as told by Giraldus:*—The beauty of the daughter of O'Melachlin, King of Meath, having awakened a passion in the breast of Turgesius, that tyrant, accustomed to the ready accomplishment of all his desires, made known to her father the unlawful views which he entertained. Concealing his horror at such a proposal, the king, in appearance, consented to surrender to him his daughter; and a small island upon Loch-var, in the county of Meath, was the place appointed for the desired interview. Thither it was fixed that the princess, attended by fifteen maidens, should come at an appointed hour; and there Turgesius, with as many young Danish noblemen, was waiting impatient to receive her. The supposed handmaids, however, of the princess were, in reality, fifteen brave and beardless youths, selected for the purpose, who, hiding each a *skian* or dagger under his robe, took advantage of the first opportunity that offered, and, falling upon the tyrant and his followers, despatched the whole party. It is added, that the fame of this gallant achievement having spread rapidly through the country, the Danes were in every quarter attacked,† and either got rid of by the knife or sword, or else compelled to return to Norway and the different isles from whence they came.‡

This romantic account of the death of Turgesius, resembling, in some of its particulars, a stratagem recorded by Plutarch in his Life of Pelopidas, is not to be found in any of the Irish books of annals; wherein it is simply stated, that the tyrant fell into the hands of O'Melachlin, and was by him drowned in Loch-var.§ But, whatever may have been the real circumstances attending the death of this pirate-king, of the great importance of its results there is not any reason to doubt; and although, to the wholesale assertion of Giraldus, that Ireland was from thenceforth entirely free from the yoke of the Danes, her subsequent history affords but too downright a contradiction, it is certain that their power was from thenceforth considerably reduced; and that, however harassing at all times, and even occasionally formidable, they never afterwards regained their former strength or sway.

* "Fabulam olent (says Dr. O'Connor) quæ de morte Turgesii a 15 puellis interfecto refert Giraldus."

† Annal. iv. Mag. 843. (844.) In the *Chronic. de Gest. Northman.* published by André du Chesne, this victory of the Irish over the Danes (which the chronicler places in the year 848,) is thus triumphantly recorded:—"Scoti super Northmannos irruentes, auxilio Dei victores, eos à suis finibus expellunt."—*Hist. Franc. et Norman. Script. Antiq.*

‡ Fama igitur pernicibus alis totam statim insulam pervolante, et rei eventum, ut assolet, divulgante Norwagienses ubique truncantur, et in brevi omnes omnino seu vi, seu dolo, vel morti traduntur; vel iterum Norwagiam et insulas unde venerant, navigio adire compelluntur.—Girald. Cambrens. *Topog. Hibern.* Dist. iii. c. 41.

§ Annal. Ult. ad an. 844. This lake is, by Seward (*Topographia Hibern.*,) placed near Mullingar. According to the Annals of Inisfallen, however, the scene of the tyrant's death was Lake Annin in Meath. Much doubt has arisen as to the exact year in which this event happened; some placing it in 844, when Malachy was still but King of Meath, while others (Usher, *Ind. Chron.*) advance it to 848, when he had been raised to the throne of Ireland. I have followed, as the reader will see, the ordinary date of our own annals; though the record cited above from the Norse Chronicles, fixing the reduction and expulsion of the Danes from Ireland at A. D. 848, would incline me to think that the date of the death of Turgesius should be referred to the same year.

CHAPTER XVII.

Arrival of reinforcements to the Danes.—Alliances between these foreigners and the natives.—Demoralizing effects thereof.—Divisions among the Northmen themselves.—Arrival of these Norwegian brothers.—Tax called nose-money imposed on the Irish.—Reign of the monarch Aod Finliath.—Exploits of Anlaf the Dane.—Reign of the monarch Flan Sions.—Retrospect of the affairs of the Scots of North Britain.—Reign of Cormac Mac Culinan, King of Munster.—Death of Cormac in the great Battle of Moyalbe.—His character.

So signal and decisive appeared the advantage which had been gained over the common enemy, that Melachlin, who had now succeeded to the throne of Ireland,* despatched ambassadors to the court of France on the occasion, announcing his intention to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy City, as an act of thanksgiving for such a deliverance, and asking permission to pass through France on his way.† The constant influx of Irish missionaries into France during the eighth and ninth centuries, had brought the two countries, as has been already remarked, into amicable relations with each other; and the high repute which the learned Irishman, John Erigena, now enjoyed at the French court, must have still more conciliated for his countrymen the good opinion both of the monarch and his subjects. The ambassadors sent on the solemn mission just referred to, were the bearers of costly presents to the French King; but the intended visit of the royal pilgrim, which they came to announce, was, by a return of the troubles of his kingdom, frustrated.

The Danes, though dispersed and apparently subdued, were still numerous in those parts of the island they had so long possessed; and waited but a reinforcement from the shores of the Baltic,‡ to enable them to reappear in the field as formidable as ever.

A. D. 849. With so strong a sense of the value of the possession they had lost, they were of course not slow in devising means for its speedy recovery; and accordingly, in the year 849,§ a fleet from the north, consisting of 140 sail, landed a fresh supply of force upon the coast of Ireland:‖ and the war, which had slumbered but from want of fuel, was now with all its former vigour rekindled.

While the violence, too, of the contending parties continued, in its renewed shape, as fierce and barbarous as ever, there was now introduced in their relations to each other a material and demoralizing change,—a readiness to merge their mutual hostility in the joint pursuit of plunder or revenge; and to fight side by side under the same banner, regardless of aught but the selfish interests of the moment;—a change, which, it is evident, to the moral character of both parties could not be otherwise than deeply and lastingly injurious. Upon the public mind of Ireland, in particular, the effects of such warfare must have been to the deepest degree degrading. The dissensions of a people among themselves, however fatal to the national strength, may not be inconsistent with a generous zeal for the national glory and welfare; but when, as in this instance, they invite the foreigner to cast his sword into the scale, they not only blindly invite slavery, but also richly deserve it.

A. D. 850. The first example of such degeneracy at this period was set by the Irish monarch, Melachlin himself; who achieved, with the assistance of the Danes, a dishonourable victory over his own countrymen. In like manner, a prince named Keneth, the lord of the Cianachta¶ of Meath, was enabled by the same base sort of confederacy

* It would appear, from the instance of Malachy, that even when lord of all Meath by inheritance, the monarch was not suffered to retain that principality after his succession to the supreme throne; as we shall find that, during Malachy's reign, Meath was held jointly by two other princes.

† "Rex Scotorum ad Carolum, pacis et amicitiæ gratia, legatos cum muneribus mittit, viam sibi petendi Romam concedi deposcens."—*Chron. de Gest. Normann.*

‡ With an easterly wind the northern navigators calculated but three days as the average duration of a voyage to the British Isles:—"Triduo, flantibus Euris, vela panduntur."—*Script. Rer. Den.*

§ Annal. Inisfall. ad ann. 849.

‖ Ware, *Antiq.* c. 24.—Annals of Ulster, ap. Johnstone, *Antiq. Scand. Celt.*

¶ There were several other Cianachtas throughout Ireland; but this in Meath, and the other, called the Cianachta of Glingiven, in the North Hy-Nial, were the most noted. See *Dissert. on Hist. of Ireland.*—There was also another in Derry, from whence a sept of the O'Connors derived the title of O'Concubar Kianachta. O'Brien (*in voce* Cianachta) interprets the use of the word, in this instance, as meaning that these O'Connors were descended from Cian, the son of the great Olliol-Ollum; and this derivation of the term would seem to be countenanced by a similar application of the word Eoganacth to territories belonging to the descendants of Eogan More (See Ware, *Antiq.* c. 7.) But Cianachta appears to me to have had a more general import; and, from the manner in which it is used by Tigernach (*Rer. Hib. Script.* p. 44.,) must have meant, I think, a particular measure of land, as he speaks there of "a thirty-fold Cianachata."—*Trichac. Cianes.*

to lay waste the territories of the princely Hy-Niells from the source of the Shannon to the sea.*

Had this spirit of disunion and faithlessness been confined to the natives alone, they must at once have fallen an easy prey to the stranger; but, luckily, the habit of serving as mercenaries soon estranged the loyalty of the Danes from their own cause: and, according as they became divided among themselves, they grew less formidable as enemies. There occurred an event, also, about the middle of this century, which added a new source of internal division to the many that already distracted and weakened their strength. An army of Northmen, called the Dubh-Gals, or Black Strangers, as being of a different race from those hitherto known in Ireland, having landed in considerable force in the year 850,† made an attack on the Fin-Gals, or White Strangers, already in possession of Dublin;‡ and, after defeating them with great slaugbter, made themselves masters of that city and its adjoining territories. In the following year, however, the Fin-Gals, being reinforced from their own country, attacked the Black Gentiles, by whom they had been driven from Dublin; and, after a battle which lasted, according to the annalists,§ three days and three nights, compelled them to abandon their ships, and regained possession of the city.

It was soon after this latter occurrence that the three brothers, Anlaf, Ivar, and Sitric, of the royal blood of Norway, arriving with a large army collected from the different isles of the North, took possession of the three great maritime positions,—Dublin, Limerick, and Waterford;‖ and while Anlaf and Ivar, to whom fell the sovereignty over the former two cities, enlarged considerably their boundaries, and, it is not improbable, fortified them, the remaining brother, Sitric, is generally allowed to have been the first founder of Waterford.¶ A. D. 853.

However suspicious, in most of its circumstances, is the tale told by Cambrensis,** respecting the stratagems of these brother chieftains, in coming under the assumed guise of merchants, and thus obtaining for themselves and their followers a friendly footing in different parts of the country, it is by no means improbable that to their skill and success in commercial pursuits, as well as to that command over the Irish sea-coasts which their position and practice in seamanship gave them, they were mainly indebted for the acknowledged influence they so soon attained throughout the kingdom. How considerable was the amount of this power may be judged from two pregnant facts stated by the annalists,—that to these brothers not only the foreigners throughout the whole island submitted, but likewise the natives were all compelled to pay them tribute.††

What was the nature of the tribute they exacted from the Irish, or whether it resembled the famous Danegelt in its first form, when paid by the English to purchase a respite from Danish plunder, does not appear from any of the records. We are told, indeed, of a tax imposed by Turgesius, called Argiod-Sron, or Nose-money, from the penalty attached to its non-payment being no less than the loss of the defaulter's nose. A sort of tax, bearing the same name, but not enforced by the same inhuman forfeit, appears, from

* Annal. IV. Mag. ad ann. 848.

† Ann. Ult.—Ware and Lanigan place it in the year 851. The Four Masters, as usual, antedate the event, making it in 849.

‡ In Harris's *Annals of Dublin*, A. D. 838, it is said, "Dublin now submitted to them (the Ostmen, or Danes) for the first time, in which they raised a strong rath, and thereby curbed not only the city, but, in a little time, extended their conquests through Fingal to the north, and as far as Bray and the mountains of Wicklow to the south. These parts seem to have been soon after made the head of the Danish settlements in Leinster; and from them Fingal took its name, as much as to say, *The Territory of the White Foreigners*, or Norwegians, as the country to the south of Dublin was called *Dubh-Gall*, or the Territory of *the Black Foreigners*, from the Danes. This last denomination is not preserved in history, that we know of; but it remains by tradition among the native Irish of these parts to this day." The writer would have found, in the Annals of the Four Masters, the name of *Dubh-ghall* applied to these strangers; while in the Annals of Inisfallen and of Ulster, they are styled *Dubh-gentis*, or Black Gentiles, and the others, *Fionn-geinte*, or White Gentiles.

§ Annal. Ult. ad an. 851. (852.) Annal. Inisfall. ad ann. 852.

‖ Annal. Ult. ad an. 852 (853.) Annal. Inisfall. ad ann. 853.

¶ Smith, *Hist. of Waterford*, c. 4.—"Were we to believe Giraldus Cambrensis," says Dr. Lanigan, "Sitric was the founder of Limerick" (c. xxi. sect. 14. note 143.) But this is an oversight; for it is to Ivar that Giraldus attributes the construction of this city. "Constructis itaque primò civitatibus tribus, Dublinia, Gwaterfordia, Limerico, Dublinia principatus cessit Amelao. Gwaterfordiæ Sytaraco, Limerici Yuoro."—*Topog. Hib. Dist.* iii. c. 43. It is clear that Dublin, of which Giraldus attributes the building to Amlaf, had been in existence, though probably but an inconsiderable place, long before this time; and the Annals of Inisfallen fix the first occupation of it by the Danes, in the year 837. Of Limerick, its historian, Ferrar, says, "According to a manuscript in the editor's possession, the Danes got possession of Limerick in the year 855." But we have seen that, about a dozen years earlier, that place had been used by the Northmen as a station for their ships.

** Topograph. Hibern. Dist. 3. c. 43.

†† IV. Mag. ad ann. 851. Annal. Inisfall. ad ann. 852. The latter annalist thus states the fact:—Gur ghialleat Lochiannaiebh Eiriona do, 7 cios o Ghaedhalaibh do.

one of the Sagas,* to have been in use among the ancient Scandinavians; and such, most probably, was the nature of the tribute now exacted by their descendants, though thus misrepresented, according to the usual bias of history when the hand of an enemy holds the pen.

On the death of the monarch, Melachlin, he was succeeded in the throne by Aodh Finliath, a prince,† of the northern Hy-Niell, who had, just before his accession, in concert with the Danes, overrun and ravaged the kingdom of Meath. This principality, which formed no longer an inseparable adjunct of the monarchy, was, at the time of Aodh's succession, held in partition between the two princes, Lorcan and Concobar; on the former of whom the new monarch laid violent hands and deprived him of his eyes; while the latter was drowned at Clonard by Aodh's accomplice and ally, Anlaf the Dane.‡

A. D. 863.

The deeds of this adventurous Northman occupy a conspicuous space in the records of his time. Besides his various exploits in Irish warfare, among which the spoliation of the rich city of Armagh, and the burning of its shrines and hospitals, was not the least memorable, he also refreshed his veteran followers with an occasional inroad into North Britain, where the now weakened Britons of Strath-Clyde opposed but a feeble resistance; and the renowned fortress of Alcluyd, after a blockade of four months, fell into his power.§ At length, in one of these incursions into the Albanian territory, he was surprised by a stratagem of the Scots and slain.

A. D. 849.

The fame of Ireland, as a place of refuge for the exile and sufferer, was, even in these dark times, maintained; and we find Roderick, King of Wales, when compelled to abandon his own dominions to the Danes, seeking an asylum on the Irish shores.‖

After a reign of sixteen years, the monarch, Aodh Finliath, departed this life; and Flan Siona, a prince of the South Hy-Niell, succeeded to the throne. It has been seen, from the time of the first establishment of an Irish colony in North Britain,¶ how close and friendly continued to be the intercourse between that settlement and the mother country,—cemented as it was by all those ties which consanguinity, perpetual alliance, and frequent intermarriages, could create. To this connexion between the two kingdoms a new link had, during the late reign, been added by the marriage of the Irish monarch, Aodh Finliath, with Malmaria, the daughter of the renowned Keneth Mac-Alpine.

A. D. 879.

Some time having elapsed since I last submitted to the reader any notice of the affairs of the Scots of North Britain,**—a people whose annals the parent country long identified with her own,††—it may not be amiss to review briefly the course of that colony since the period at which our last notice of it terminated. The ruler of the Scoto-Irish settlement at that time was Aidan, the royal friend of St. Columba, under whose sway (A. D. 590,) it ceased to be tributary to the Irish crown,‡‡ and became an independent kingdom. On the small stage of this miniature realm,§§ we find acted over again most of the dark and troubled scenes of the Irish pentarchy; the same lawlessness and turbulence,

* In the Ynglinga Saga, it is said that Odin introduced such laws as before were in use among the Asi; and, "throughout all Swedland, the people paid unto Odin a Scotpenny for each nose."

† Annal. Inisfall. ad an. 863. According to these annals, it was through the aid of Anlaf and the Danes, that Aodh Finliath was raised to the throne.

‡ IV. Mag. ad an. 862 (863.)

§ Annal. Ult. ad an. 869, and 870. "Alcluyd was wholly razed to the ground. The 'Black Strangers' were resistless; and the Britons, Saxons, Angles, and Picts, were mingled in captivity beneath the yoke of Anlaf and Hingvar (Ivar.")—*Palgrave, English Commonwealth*, c. xiv.

‖ Annal. Ult. ad an. 876.

¶ For accounts of the original settlements of the Irish in North Britain, see c. vii. p. 78, and c. xi. p. 193 of this Work.

** See c. 12, p. 128 of this Work.

†† Not unfrequently, too, the records of the affairs of Albany have been corrected by reference to those of the mother country: for an instance of this, see *Rer. Hib. Script.* tom. i. p. 88., and tom. iv. p. 357. "In rebus Albanicis," says Dr. O'Connor, "longe accuratiores sunt Hibernici Annales." He adds, that if Kennedy, in his Chronological Genealogy of the Stuarts, had been more diligent in consulting the Irish annals, he would not have fallen into so many errors.

‡‡ See, for an acount of the convention held at Dromceat in the year 590, page 129 of this Work, "At that convention," says O'Flaherty, "Aidan obtained an exemption from paying tribute to the kings of Ireland; and, consequently, the honours and dignities attendant on a free and absolute sovereignty."—*Chronol. and Geneal. Catalogue of the Kings of Scotland, Ogygia Vindicated*, c. 12.

§§ The region occupied by the Scoto-Irish colony, comprised only Kentire, Argyle, and some of the islets. In a note on the annals of Tigernach, ad an. 502, Dr. O'Connor thus describes the extent of this small kingdom:—"Regiones quas filii Erci occupaverunt tendebant à freto Dunbrittannico, includentes Kentiream, Knapdaliam, Loarnam, Ardgathelliam, et Braidalban, cum vicinis insulis Hebridum." Some late writers have been induced, by the unsafe authority of Whitaker, to refer the date of the migrations of the sons of Erck to the beginning of the fourth century; but the period fixed for this event (A. D. 503,) by all the best writers on the subject will, as Pinkerton justly observes, "to any one the least versed in Irish history, or in the old Scottish chronicles, be as openly evinced as any date of Greek or Roman history."—*Inquiry*, part iv. c. 3.

redeemed sometimes by the same romantic heroism; a similar reverence for all that was sanctioned by the past, combined with as light and daring a recklessness of the future. That rooted attachment to old laws and usages which marked the natives of the mother country, was here transmitted in full force to their descendants;—the ancient language, and all the numerous traditions of which it was the vehicle; the system of clanship, and laws of succession; even the old parti-coloured dress worn by the ancient Scots,—all continued to be retained in North Britain to a much later period than among the original Irish themselves.

The native hardihood of the early colony had been strongly manifested, not only in the spirit with which they maintained themselves in their rude mountain holds, in despite of an ungenial clime, and the neighbourhood of a fierce enemy, the Picts, but also in their conversion afterwards of this enemy into an ally, and the gallant stand made by them jointly against the legions of mighty Rome. In the reign of their King Aidan (572—605,) the longest and most glorious of any in the Dalriadic annals, these highlanders encountered the Saxon invaders on the borders of Westmorland, and in two several engagements defeated them.* At length, elated too much by his successes, Aidan ventured to attack the Bernician king, Æthelfrid, in the full career of his victories, and sustained, on that occasion, so signal a defeat, that he himself was but able to escape with a few followers from the field.† This was the last effort of military prowess,‡ out of their own immediate region, upon which the Scots of North Britain are known for some centuries to have ventured. After the death of this able prince, not merely their external influence declined, but the peace and union which he had managed to maintain within his small dominions, almost entirely vanished.

The elements of anarchy, which this Irish colony had imported with them, in their system of chieftainship and the rivalry of septs which naturally sprung out of it,§ were, of course, not tardy in developing themselves; and there arose a feud between the two kindred races of Fergus and Lorn,‖ which for more than a century and a half divided this small community into two fierce and irreconcileable factions. Throughout the whole time during which this division lasted, the respective tribes were kept in a state of perpetual strife; and we are told that, on one occasion, when each of the antagonist sovereigns had sent out a fleet composed of currachs, or small leathern boats, to attack the dominions of the other, the two armaments met off Ardanesse, on the coast of Argyleshire, and a naval battle took place between them, which ended in a victory on the side of the belligerant who boasted his descent in the line of Fergus. At length an arrangement was brought about, by which, as in the alternate succession of the north and south Hy-Niells in Ireland, the rival races of Lorn and Fergus were, each in turn, to succeed the other on the throne.

During the whole of this state of affairs, of which the Picts, it might be supposed, would gladly have taken advantage, as opening so favourable a field for designs against the independence of their Scottish neighbours, no act indicative of such a policy appears to be recorded; and it was not till near the middle of the eighth century (A. D. 736,) that that series of fierce conflicts between the Scots and Picts commenced, which ended, after a long struggle and with alternate success, in placing a Scoto-Irish prince on the throne of the Pictish kings.

With the expectation, doubtless, of softening, by a family alliance, the mutual hostility of the two kingdoms, a marriage was contracted, early in the ninth century, between

* Both these victories of Ædan are mentioned, in the annals of Ulster, at 581, and 589. In the curious Duan ascribed to Malcolm the Third's bard, this Scoto-Irish king is called "Ædan of the extended territories."

† Bede thus speaks of the second battle:—"Motus ejus profectibus Ædan rex Scotorum qui Britanniam inhabitant venit contra eum cum immenso exercitu, sed cum paucis victus aufugit."—*Hist. Ecclesiast.*, lib. i. c. 34. The record of this battle, in the Saxon Chronicle, is thus confusedly rendered by a late translator:—"The Scots fought with the Dalreathians, and with Ethelfrith, King of the Northumbrians." A full account of the achievements of this Scoto-Irish king may be found in Buchanan, *Rer. Scot. Hist.* lib. 5. *Rex* xlix.

‡ According to Sigebert. ad an. 615, this defeat of the Scoto-Irish had been foretold by the apostle of the English, Augustin. "Hæc calamitas Scottis contingit secundum vaticinium Augustini episcopi, qui interminatus est Scottos ab Anglis fore perimendos."

Bishop Lloyd thus marks the dates, both of this event and of the settlement of the Scots in North Britain:—"In the year 603 (which I reckon to have been just a hundred years after their coming into Britain,) that prince, Aidan, having a jealousy of Æthelfrid, &c."—*On Church Govern.* c. i.

§ Sine rege ac certo imperio per cognitiones tributim sparsis.—*Buchan.* lib. 4.

‖ At a still earlier period, the race of Fergus alone had supplied sufficient materials of discord from its own stock,—the septs of Comgal and of Gauran, both descended from Fergus, having, for a length of time, convulsed this small realm with their feuds. At length, in 571, a sanguinary battle decided their respective pretensions, leaving the tribe of Gauran in the possession of Kintire, while Argyle fell to the tribe of Comgall; "and these two tribes," says Chalmers, "are sometimes distinguished in the Irish annals as the sept of Kintire, and the sept of Argail."—Vol. I. Book ii. c. vi. See also this useful work (*loc. citat.*) for a Genealogical Table of the Dalriadic Kings.

Achy, or Achaius, King of the Scots, and a Pictish princess named Urgusia; and this connexion, though it had not the effect of even abating the mutual enmity of the two kingdoms, was the means ultimately of conducing to that only issue of such a contest by which it could be summarily, and without chance of revival, extinguished. About the middle of the same century, Keneth Mac Alpine, the grandson of the Princess Urgusia, furnished with the double claim arising from military prowess and his maternal descent, took the field, assisted by Irish auxiliaries, against the Picts; and, after a battle, renewed, as the chroniclers tell us, no less than seven times in one day, gained a victory over that people (A. D. 843,) so complete and decisive, as to have been exaggerated by panic and fiction into their total extirpation.* By this event the crowns of Albany and Pictland were both united on one head; and from the same epoch is to be dated the foundation of the Scottish kingdom in North Britain;—although it is certain that the application of the name of Scotia to that country did not begin to come into use before the eleventh century.†

At this time the celebrated Lia Fail, or stone of Destiny, upon which the ancient kings of Ireland used to be inaugurated,‡ and which had been brought over into Albany by Fergus, the leader of the Dalriadic colony, was removed by the conqueror of the Picts from Argyle to Scone, where it remained till the time of Edward I., by whom it was transferred to Westminster Abbey.

To return to the course of our history.—The marriage of Malmaria, the daughter of the conqueror of the Picts to Aodh Finliath, the monarch now ruling over Ireland, was, as we have seen, a continuance of the ancient ties of amity between the two kindred kingdoms of Ireland and of Albany. After Aodh's death,§ his successor, Flan Siona (A. D. 879,) solicited also and won the hand of the widowed Queen Malmaria, who became, through this double alliance, the means of connecting the three great branches of the Hy-Niell race, the Tyronian, the Clan-Colman, and the Slanian, to the utter exclusion of the fourth, or Tyrconnel branch, from the succession to the monarchy.‖

A. D. 879.

Among the deficiencies most to be complained of by a reader of our early history, is the want of the interest and instruction arising from the contemplation of individual character,—the rare occurrence, not merely of marked historical personages, but of any actors in the tumultuous scene sufficiently elevated above their contemporaries to attract the eye in passing, or form a resting place for the mind. To this but too obvious defect of our early annals, a rare exception occurs at the period we have now reached, in the person of Cormac Mac Culinan, King and Bishop of Cashel, whose connexion with the literary as well as the political history of his country, imparts an interest to his name and reign but seldom attendant upon the records of his brother kings and bishops.

A. D. 901 to 903.

The union of the regal and sacerdotal powers in the same person was not without precedent in Cormac's own family;—two of his ancestors, Oncobar and Cenfilad, having

* The original source of this extravagant fiction was the ancient chronicler, Henry of Huntingdon, according to whom the very language of the Picts passed suddenly into oblivion:—"Non solum reges eorum, et principes, et populum deperiisse, verum etiam stirpem omnem, et linguam et mentionem simul defecisse."—Lib. I. Buchanan mentions an ancient prophecy, which had foretold this utter extinction of the Picts by the Scots:—"Divinitus Pictis dictionem esse datam fore, ut aliquando tota gens a Scotis deleretur."—Lib iv.

† Usher is decidedly of opinion, that no instance can be produced of the name Scotia having been applied to the present Scotland before the eleventh century;—"Quod ut ante *undecimum* post Christi nativitatem seculum haud quaquam factum, in fine præcedentis Capitis declaravimus: ita neminem, qui toto antecedentium annorum spacio scripserit produci posse arbitramur qui *Scotia* appellatione Albaniam unquam designaverit."—*Eccles. Primord.* c. 16. Dr. O'Connor follows Usher in this opinion (*Prol.* i. 63;) and Pinkerton, agreeing with both, says, "the truth is, that from the fourth century to the eleventh, the names Scotia and Scoti belonged solely to Ireland and the Irish."—*Inquiry*, part iv. c. 1. Sir Walter Scott, therefore, anticipates by a century or two, when, in speaking of Kenneth Macalpine, he says, "The country united under his sway was then, for the first time, called Scotland; which name it has ever since retained."—*Hist. of Scotland, Cab. Cyc.* vol. i. c. ii.

‡ Said to have been brought into Ireland by the Tuatha-de-Danaan.—See p. v. p. 57 of this Work. Of this relic, and its removal, Drayton thus makes mention:—

> "Our Longshanks, Scotland's scourge, who to the Orcads raught
> His sceptre; and with him, from wild Albania brought
> The reliques of her crown (by him first placed here,)
> The seat on which her kings inaugurated were."
>
> *Polyolb. Seventeenth Song.*

§ iv. Mag. ad ann. 876. (æræ commun. 879.)

‖ Hinc sequitur O'Neillos Tironenses Clan Colmannos, et Clan Slanios per Maelmariam consociatos fuisse, et Tirconnallenses a Regimine Hibernorum prorsus exclusos.—*Rer. Hib. Script.* t. iv. ad ann. 876. *Nota.* See also, *Dissert. on the Hist. of Ireland*, sect. xv.

been, at their respective periods, kings of Cashèl as well as bishops of Emly.* As Cashel had, in the times preceding his reign, been comprised in the see of Emly, some wonder has been expressed at its appearance as a distinct bishopric in the instance of King Cormac. But though no record of the change exists, it may fairly be concluded that, as one of the consequences of the high political rank which Munster had now assumed, its capital city had been equally advanced on the scale of episcopal jurisdiction; and it seems even probable that the station of metropolitical see which Cashel afterwards attained had long before been held virtually by it as the capital of Munster.

In upholding the triple character of king, bishop, and warrior, this prince had been anticipated by his ancestor, Olchobar Mac Kenedi, who, in like manner, though a bishop and abbot, illustrated the annals of his reign by a brilliant victory over the Danes.†

The very brief period during which Cormac held the sceptre was passed, unremittingly, by him in warfare both with the monarch and the King of Leinster; but whether through provocation originating with himself or his antagonists is a point variously represented by historians. Judging from the dates, however, assigned to the transactions by the annalists, it is clearly unjust to attribute the first hostile movement to Cormac, who, on the contrary, appears to have been administering the affairs of his kingdom in peace, when Flann-Sions, then monarch of Ireland, made an irruption into Munster, and laid waste the country from Gaura to Limerick.‡ An opportunity of taking revenge for this wanton inroad was not long wanting. In the following year, attended by Flaherty, the warlike abbot of Iniscathy, who was the chief prompter and adviser of his military enterprises, Cormac gave battle to the monarch and his confederates, on the Heath of Moylena, a plain memorable in the traditions of older times,§ and having gained a decisive victory over them, obtained hostages as marks of submission from their royal leader. Still farther to follow up his success and bring into subjection the proud power of the Hy-Niells, Cormac marched also into Roscommon, and there exacted similar pledges of submission; thus conferring upon the Church the rare and welcome triumph of seeing the northern portion of the island rendered tributary to an ecclesiastical sovereign. A. D. 907.

The original source of the hostile feelings which had first given rise to this war, appears to have been the part taken by the monarch in encouraging and aiding the people of Leinster in their refusal to pay the customary tributes to the King of Munster.‖ This right or custom of receiving tribute in exchange for subsidies or wages, which formed a part of the relations established between the superior and inferior princes, was originally exercised by the subordinate kings only within the limits of their own provinces; while the supreme monarch asserted this right over all the provincial princes, and presenting subsidies to each, received tribute and supplies from each in return. In the course of time, however, when the throne of Cashel had become, in every respect, almost coequal with that of Tara, the King of Munster, no longer content with his own provincial resources, extended his demands over the whole of the southern moiety of Ireland, rendering tributary to himself all the other states and princes of Leath Mogh.

Such was the origin and nature of the claim which the people of Leinster now strenuously resisted, and, with a natural jealousy of so usurping a power, were as strenuously abetted in their resistance by the monarch. Both parties prepared with energy for the encounter; though to Cormac himself is attributed, by most of his historians, a strong reluctance to commit his fame and the peace of his subjects to the chance of a contest so doubtful. To whatever extent, however, such scruples may have arisen in his mind, they were completely overborne by the rash counsels of his war-minister, the impetuous abbot of Iniscathy. The army of Munster was accordingly marched into the Lagenian territory,¶ where they were met by the united forces of the monarch and the king of Leinster, supported also by most of the princes of Leath-Cuinn. A foreboding that he should fall in this battle is said to have so strongly taken possession of Cormac's mind, that, under the avowed influence of this feeling he made his last will; A. D. 908.

* Ware's Bishops, at *Emly* and *Cashel*.

† "It may be," says Lanigan, "that he was originally head bishop at Cashel, on account of his extraordinary merit, according to the Irish system of raising distinguished persons to the episcopal rank in places where previously there had been no bishops."—Chap. xxii. § iv.

‡ Annal. Inisfall. ad an. 906. Annal. Ult. ad ann. 905.

§ The plain of Lene, in the King's County, remarkable in our history for having been the scene of a great victory gained by Con "of the Hundred Battles" over his competitor for the sovereignty, Eogan Mogh-Nuad. See *Tigernach*, ad an. 181. The hero, Goll, the son of Morni, whom Macpherson borrowed from Irish history, was one of the champions that fought and conquered on the side of Connaught in that battle. See *Rer. Hib. Scrip. Prolegom.* lviii., where a Poem on the Battle of Moylena, entitled "Cath Lene," is referred to as still extant.

‖ "The Book of Wars and Battles mentions at large the reasons which induced Cormac this time to war upon the Lagenians; and says it was because their king, Cparbhull, refused to pay the usual tributes due from the kings in Leath Mogha to the King of Cashel."—*M'Curtin's Brief Discourse, &c.*

¶ Annal. Inisfall. ad an. 908.

and, though himself of the Eoganacht or Eugenian race, appointed, with a due regard to the alternate right of the Dalcassians, the prince of this tribe who was to succeed him.

The result of the battle was such as might have been expected from the disparity in numbers of the two armies engaged. After a long and desperate struggle, the troops of Munster were at length forced to give way; and Cormac himself, according to his foreboding, was among the slain; having, as some relate, been thrown from his horse in the heat and press of the engagement. A number of other princes and nobles of Munster, whose names are enumerated by the annalists, were, together with 6000 of their respective clans,* put to the sword, on that day. Among the most distinguished of the slain are mentioned the abbots of Cork and of Kinetty;† two of that numerous body of ecclesiastics who, forced by the overwhelming inroads of the Danes to take up arms in defence of themselves and their establishments, became at length but too much accustomed to this fleshly warfare,‡ and in more than one instance, like the fierce abbot of Iniscathy, imbittered far more than they mitigated the horrors of civil strife.

As far as the few events known of his life enable us to judge of Cormac's character and career, he appears to have been an accomplished and gentle-minded ecclesiastic, raised late in life to the stormy possession of a throne, and made evidently the instrument, during his few years of sovereignty, of some of the more violent and aspiring spirits of his order. With the exception of a simple announcement of his accession to the see of Cashel, there occurs no mention in our annals of his name till after he had ascended the throne of Munster, which warrants the conclusion that his previous life had been passed in peaceful pursuits; while the memorable monuments of his taste and talent which he left behind in his famous Psalter, a work illustrative of Irish antiquities, and the beautiful chapel built by him at Cashel, which still retains his name, show that his leisure had not been unprofitably, nor without honour to himself and his country, employed.

When advanced to the throne, the views and counsels by which he was guided were those of others, it is manifest, not his own; and the same gentleness of nature which had fitted him for a life of peace will account also for the culpable facility with which he now suffered himself to be involved in war. Once committed, however, in the strife, he appears to have deported himself in a manner becoming a king and general, in such exigencies; and the circumstances preceding the fatal battle in which he fell,—the making of his will, bequeathing gifts to his favourite friends and the principal churches,§—his sending for Lorcan, the head of the Dalcassian tribe, and declaring, in the presence of all his court and kinsmen, that this prince was his rightful successor in the throne—all these deliberate preparations for a fate which he felt to be near at hand, contrasted with the rash and vulgar turbulence of those who were hurrying him to that doom, presents altogether a picture of moral dignity, of calm encounter with fortune, which, to whatever age or country it might have belonged, could not fail to awaken interest and respect.

In endeavouring to secure, as far as was in his power, to the Dalcassian branch of his family their right of alternate succession to the throne of Munster, he made but a due return of justice and gratitude for all the generous services rendered by that gallant sept, as well to himself as to many of his predecessors,‖ though of the rival and too often usurping branch. Occupying a district which served as a frontier ground between Munster and Connaught, it was upon these brave warriors that always fell the first brunt of invasion in any incursions from the latter province;¶ while, by means of their signal-

* The Annals of Inisfallen mention particularly the clan of Eogan, and the clan of Neill:—*Chinneil Eogain 7 meran eile d'uaisibh cloinne Neill.*

† IV. Mag.

‡ Hume, speaking of the same period in England, says, "The ecclesiastics were then no less warlike than the civil magistrates."—(Vol. i. c. ii.) and Mosheim, in his account of the internal state of the church in the ninth century, tells us,—"The bishops and heads of monasteries held many lands and castles by a feudal tenure; and being thereby bound to furnish their princes with a certain number of soldiers in time of war, were obliged also to take the field themselves at the head of these troops."—Cent. 9, part 2, c. ii.

§ The following is the list of his presents to the churches, as I find it in Keating:—"An ounce of gold, an ounce of silver, and a horse and arms to Ardfinan; a golden and a silver chalice, and a vestment of silk, to Lismore; a golden and a silver chalice, 4 ounces of gold, and 5 of silver, to Cashel; 3 ounces of gold, and a mass-book, to Emly; an ounce of gold, and another of silver, to Glendaloch; a horse and arms, with an ounce of gold, and a silk vestment, to Kildare; 24 ounces of gold and of silver to Armagh; 3 ounces of gold to Iniscatha; 3 ounces of gold, and a silk vestment, with his royal benediction, to the successor of Mungaired (Mungret.") Whatever authenticity may be claimed for this part of Cormac's will, the bequests to his friends, which are enumerated in verse, bear evident marks of more modern fabrication; the list of articles comprising, among other things, "a clock," and a "coat of mail of bright and polished steel."

‖ The particulars of the many good services of the clan of Dalgais to the kings of Munster, in the disputes between that province and Leinster, are recorded in a poem composed by O'Dugan.—See *Appendix to Nicholson's Histor. Lib.*

¶ "There existed, from an early period, a constant enmity between the two provinces, Connaught and Munster, and the present county of Clare was the bone of contention; the Conacians claiming it, as being

fires, lighted up rapidly from hill to hill, they gave instant alarm to the neighbouring districts, and secured the inhabitants* from surprise. Among the recorded tributes to the high reputation of this brave sept, was one from the pen, as we are told, of Cormac himself; who said that, "in the vanguard was always the post of the Dalgais on entering an enemy's country, and in the rear when retiring from it."†

Some writers have asserted that, in despite of the solemn will of Olill Ollum, enjoining that the succession to the throne of Cashel should be enjoyed alternately by the Eugenian and Dalcassian branches of his family, yet so often had the former tribe encroached on the rights of the latter, that little more than one-third of the princes elevated to that throne had been of the Dalcassian race. Were this statement correct, so frequent an infringement of an old law of succession would have formed a rare exception to the general fidelity with which the ancient Irish were known to have adhered to such settlements. It appears, however, that the disparity in numbers observable between the Eugenian and Dalcassian kings of Munster, can be traced satisfactorily to the practice prevalent among the antiquaries of some great houses, of lengthening out the series of the family succession by means of adscititious names. In this sort of genealogical imposture the seanachies or antiquaries of the Eugenian race are said to have rather unwarrantably indulged; insomuch that were their catalogue of kings retrenched of its interpolated names, the excess of the number of their reigning princes over that of the Dalcassians would be found considerably diminished.‡

By the monkish chroniclers, the reign of their favourite king, Cormac, is described as a period rich in all earthly blessings; an interval of sunshine between past and coming storms, in whose cheering light religion and learning revived, the song of peace was again heard upon the hills, and the smile of returning prosperity diffused brightness over the whole face of the land.§ In writing of the reign of a bishop-king, the monastic historian may well be indulged in some flights of zeal; but unluckily the picture here presented can boast no semblance whatever of truth. So far from the short period of Cormac's reign having been an epitome, as here described, of the golden age, it was, on the contrary, marked throughout with all the worst features of violence and injustice that ordinarily disfigure the face of Irish history; rendered, in this instance, still more odious by the gross and prominent part which an unworthy pretender to the priestly character performed in the transactions of the scene.

In one respect only may the prospects of the country be said to have brightened to a certain extent at this period. The ascendancy of the Danes had, by some late victories over them, been considerably diminished; and the expulsion of great numbers of them from the island had but the year before Cormac's accession been effected.

This partial deliverance from foreign encroachment, accomplished chiefly by the brave efforts of the people of Leinster, who had too often on former occasions disgraced themselves by confederacy with this same foe, has been represented carelessly by some historians as a total expulsion of the Danish marauders from the island.‖ Whereas, it is certain that at this period, and for a long time after, there continued to be stationary settlements of the Danes on various parts of the sea-coast, so well established in their several positions, and engaged in commercial pursuits as to have become, to a great degree, incorporated with the population of the country. That the chiefs of these maritime settlements may have acted as leaders, occasionally, to some of those numerous swarms of adventurers that were, from time to time, wafted from the Baltic, may be fairly

included in Northern Ireland. At an early period the Momonians were obliged to make Fearan Cloidhimh, or Sword-Land, of all the western coast; as they were, after the death of Goll, of many other parts."—*Note on a Translation of the Ode of Goll the Son of Morni, Transact. of R. I. Academy*, 1788.

* "It is curious, even at this day, to observe the judgment with which these beacons were placed. I have examined several of these eminences, and not only through the whole county of Clare were forts so disposed that in two hours the entire country could receive the alarm, whether the attempts were made by sea or land, or both, but in Lower Ormond stations were so judiciously placed that the least attempts or preparations, towards the Shannon side, were quickly made known."—*O'Halloran, Hist. of Ireland*, book ii. c. 1.

† Vallancey, *Law of Tanistry illustrated.*

‡ In many instances, kings of Munster, who had been coregnants, or reigning at the same time in different parts of the country, were set down in the list of the Eugenian antiquaries as having reigned separately, and at different periods. To show the lengths to which this deception was carried, one example will suffice. From the year of the battle in which Cormac fell (908,) to the death of Callaghan Cashel, King of Munster (954,) (a period of forty-six years) there reigned over Munster three successive princes. But into this same interval, namely, between the death of Cormac and that of Callaghan Cashel, the Eugenian antiquaries have crowned no less than 13 kings, and distributed among them a series of 165 years.

A similar imposture seems to have been practised by the Scandinavian historians; and Torfæus, as quoted by Mallet, accuses Saxo-Grammaticus of having inserted, in his list of kings, "tantôt des princes étrangers, tantôt des seigneurs ou vassaux puissans."—*Mallet. Introduct.*

§ See Keating, O'Halloran, M'Curtin, &c.

‖ "In 902 the Danes were slaughtered by the people, and the whole of them driven out of Ireland."—*Lanigan, Ecclesiast. Hist.* chap. 22, § 3.

and rationally taken for granted. But it is not the less evident that, throughout all this period, there remained fixed in the four great holds of their power,—Dublin, Waterford, Wexford, and Limerick,—a no inconsiderable amount of Danish population; and that those boasts of an entire expulsion of the Danes, which occur more than once in the records of this and the preceding century, imply nothing more than the total dispersion of some of those later swarms of freebooters, from whose visitation, arriving fresh as they did to the work of spoil and murder, it might well be considered a triumph and signal blessing to have been delivered.

In the year 908, but a very short time after the period when all the Northmen, it is pretended, were driven out of the country, we find them in full force under the command of Tomar, the Jarl of the Limerick Danes, pursuing their accustomed course of rapine and devastation; and, among other specified enormities, plundering the rich monastery of Clonmacnois, and laying waste the beautiful isles of Lough Ree,*—from all which places, it is added, they carried away "great spoil of gold and silver, and many precious articles." In two years after this period a fleet arrived in Waterford from the Baltic, bringing to the Danes of that city a fresh accession of force; and it appears that, towards the end of the monarch Flan Siona's reign, their numbers had augmented considerably throughout the whole province of Munster. Some jealousies, however, had evidently broken out between the different tribes of the Northmen; as, in a massacre which took place in the church of Mochelloc,† where a great number of the Waterford Danes were attacked and slaughtered by the people of Munster, the latter were assisted in perpetrating this sacrilege by the Danes of Limerick.‡

A. D. 910.

In the year 916, the monarch, Flan Siona, died, after a long reign of thirty-six years and some months, during a part of which he was engaged in open warfare with his roydamna and son-in-law, Nial Glundubh, who now succeeded him on the throne.

A. D. 916.

CHAPTER XVIII.

State of learning and literature among the Irish in the ninth century.—Notices of writers who flourished at that period.—Ængus, the Hagiologist.—Fothad, a Poet.—Maolmura, a Bardic Historian.—Flann Maclonan, Chief Poet of all Ireland.—King Comac, author of the Psalter of Cashel.—His Chapel on the Rock of Cashel.—Date and progress of Stone Architecture in Ireland.—Account of the Culdees.—Bishops styled Princes.—Usurpation of the See of Armach by Laymen.

NOTWITHSTANDING the harassed condition of the country during the whole of the ninth century, and the repeated spoliation to which all the great monasteries, those seats of learning as well as of piety, were exposed, there still survived enough of that ardent love of instruction, for which the Irish had long been celebrated, to keep the flame from wholly expiring beneath the barbarian's tread. Many of the schools appear to have been still maintained; and although Armagh, which had once towered among them as their university, was in this century burned, and its sacred edifices destroyed,—though Iona was now so much harassed by the pirates that the shrine and relics of her saint, Columba, had been sent from thence§ for a chance of safety to Ireland,—yet that learning, such as was then cultivated, still continued to thrive in the schools of Clonmacnois, Devenish,‖ Kildare, and other such religious establishments, may be concluded from the great number of scribes, or men of letters, whose names are recorded in the obituaries of the time, as having adorned these different schools.¶

* Annal. Inisfall. ex cod. Bodleian, ad an. 908.

† Supposed to be the church of Kilmalloc, the foundation of which is attributed to St. Mochelloch; and its name a contraction, it is thought, of *Kil-mochelloch*.—See *Lanigan, Eccles. Hist.*, c. 17. § 6.

‡ Annal. Inisfall. ex cod. Bodleian, ad an. 911.

§ In the Annals of Ulster (ad an. 829) it is mentioned, that Diermit, the Abbot of Hy, came to Ireland, bringing with him the relics of St. Columba. These remains of the saint were (as we are told by Walafrid, the biographer of Blathmac) enclosed in a shrine of gold; and, having been taken from Ireland to Albany in the year 828 (*Annal. Ult.*,) were again transported back to Ireland in 830.

‖ An island in Lough Erne, on which St. Laserian, otherwise called Molaisse, is said to have founded a monastery in the sixth century. (Ware's *Catalogue of the Bishops of Clogher.*) On this island stands one of the most perfect of our Round Towers, and near it are the venerable ruins of Devenish Abbey.

¶ See the iv. Mag. for ninth century, *passim*.

In the preceding part of this volume I have in so far anticipated my task as to give some brief account of those natives of Ireland who, in the course of the ninth century, became distinguished for their learning and piety in foreign lands. It now remains for me to notice in like manner the most known and prominent among those who, during the same interval, and amidst all the distractions and commotions of their country, arrived at eminence in the same peaceful pursuits at home.

At the beginning of the century died Ængus, the learned hagiologist,* called from the piety and austerity of his life, Ceile-De, or the Servant of God.† Near the monastery of Clonenagh, of which this holy man became abbot, there was in those days, as tradition tells us, a waste solitary place, to which he used to betake himself for meditation and prayer; and from this circumstance, it is added, the place in question bears to this day the name of Desert Ængus.‡ Besides a select Martyrology, containing the names only of the chief saints, or, as he calls them, "the Princes of the Saints," Ængus was the author also of a more copious work of the same description, comprising saints of every nation and age, and including among the number some Britons, Gauls, Italians, and even Egyptians, whom he asserts to have died in Ireland, and also mentions the several places where their remains are laid.§

With this work, which is called sometimes the Psalter na Rann, another, of the same name, but not by Ængus, nor of so early a date, is frequently confounded;—the latter being a sort of miscellany relating to Irish affairs,‖ and containing, among other fabulous matter, one of the earliest outlines of that famed Milesian story, to which succeeding writers have vainly endeavoured to lend some semblance of historical substance and shape.

Among the poetical writers of this age is commemorated Fothadh, the poet of the monarch Aodh Finnliath; and one of the productions still extant under his name is an ode addressed to his royal patron on his coronation. A passage cited from this poem, relating to the fiscal rights or tributes of kings, will be found strongly to confirm and illustrate all that has been said in the preceding pages of the high station and authority, almost commensurate with that of the monarch himself, which the kings of Cashel had now, by gradual strides of encroachment, attained. "Rights," says this metrical jurisconsult, "are lawfully due to the descendants of Niell, except from the Abbot of Armagh, the King of Cashel, and the King of Tarah."

In tracing to the bardic historians of this age the origin of the Milesian fable, I have already mentioned the poet Maolmura as one of the chief and apparently most skilful of the successive fabricators of that figment.¶ The following record of this poet's death, describing him in his mixed character of bard and historian, is found in the annals of the Four Masters, under the date, A. D. 884:—"Died Maolmura, a learned and truly well-taught poet, and a historian skilled in the language of the Scots."

Towards the close of the century flourished another poet, Flann Mac Lonan,** who was called the Virgil of the race of Scota††, and held the distinguished office of Ard-Ollamh, or chief poet of all Ireland. The gift of poesy appears to have been hereditary in this laureate,—his mother, Laitheog, having attained such reputation in the art as to have affixed popularly to her name the designation of "the Poetic."

Of many of the writings attributed to the authors I have above enumerated, there still exist copies in the hands of the collectors of Irish manuscripts; while some are to be found interspersed through those various "Books," or Miscellanies, which constitute so large a portion of our ancient native literature.‡‡

* A detailed account of Ængus and his writings may be found in the Transactions of the Iberno-Celtic Society.

† The term *Ceile*, or servant, was, it appears, a very frequent adjunct to names in those times. Thus, for instance, Cele-Christ, Cele-Peter, i. e. servant of Christ, servant of Peter; and sometimes Gilla or Giolla, was used with the same import,—as in Gilla-Patrick, servant of Patrick. See O'Brien, *in voce Gilla*. This name of Ceile-De, or servant of God, which was at first applied only to some eminently pious individuals, became, somewhat later, the designation of a whole order, or community;—the name "Culdees," adopted by a certain body of ecclesiastics, who made their appearance in Ireland early in the ninth century, having been most probably derived from Ceile-De.

‡ Lanigan, *Ecclesiast. Hist. of Ireland*, c. xx. § 9.

§ Ibid. c. xx. note 105.

‖ See extract from this work, given by Ware (*Antiquities*, c. 2,) who, however, confounds the author of it with Ængus Ceile-De.

¶ See chap. viii. p. 90, of this Work.

** Annal. Inisfall. ad an. 896.

†† Virghil sil Scota prim Fhile Gaoidheal uile.— IV. Mag. ad an. 891.

‡‡ In the titles of our ancient vernacular works, the use of the word *Leabhar*, or Book, is of constant occurrence. Thus we have the Book of Reigns, the Book of Rights, the Book of Battles, the Book of Invasions, &c. &c. See the Appendix and Index to Nicholson's *Irish Historical Library*, as well as the List of Irish MSS. given by Dr. O'Connor (*Ep. Nunc.*,) where will be found enumerated the titles of more than fifty of such "Books," all of them still extant.

It was also customary to name books from the colour of their bindings. Thus there is the Leabhar Buidhe, or Yellow Book; the Leabhar Dubh, or Black Book; the Leabhar Ruadh, or Red Book; and, (as this latter volume is sometimes called) the Leabhar Breac, or Speckled Book.

It would be undoubtedly not the least interesting fact in our history at this period, could it be well ascertained that the great Alfred (as some English chroniclers have alleged) was sent by his father for religious instruction to Ireland, and there confided to the care of a female of high reputation for Christian knowledge, named Modwenna.* The religious woman of this name, best known in our ecclesiastical annals, is in general supposed to have flourished in the seventh century; but their exist probable grounds for assigning her to the ninth, which would remove one at least of the few difficulties that stand in the way of so interesting an episode in the great hero's life.

In the list of the authors of the ninth century must not be forgotten the name of Cormac, King of Munster; who, to his compound designation of prelate-king, superadds another, not, I fear, less incongruous, that of poet-historian. Whether there be still extant any copy of his famous Psalter of Cashel,†—a work containing, as we are told, besides other matter, all the details of the Milesian romance, as then brought together and methodized by his pen,—appears a point by no means easy to be ascertained; nor, except as a subject of mere antiquarian curiosity, can it be accounted much worth the trouble of inquiry. The small and beautiful chapel erected by him, on the Rock of Cashel, and still bearing his name, is assuredly, as an index of the progress of the useful and elegant arts at this period, a much more important object of interest and research.

By some of the inquirers into our antiquities it has been asserted, that neither in domestic or ecclesiastical architecture was stone and cement of lime used by the native Irish, at any period antecedent to the twelfth century;‡ while others, on the contrary, maintain that there existed structures of this kind for religious purposes as far back as the fifth and sixth centuries; and some have even been of opinion that both the Round Towers, and the ancient churches near which they stand, were alike the work of the Christian Irish in those ages.§

About half-way, perhaps, between these two widely different views may be found, as in most such disputes respecting Irish antiquities, the point nearest to the truth. That it was an unusual practice in Ireland, even so late as the twelfth century, to erect structures of stone for any purpose, domestic or ecclesiastical, may be concluded from one or two authentic anecdotes of that period. When the celebrated archbishop, Malachy, undertook, on his return from Rome to Ireland, to build, at Banchor, a small stone oratory, after the fashion of those he had seen in other countries, considerable wonder was ex-

* "If it be true, as some chroniclers intimate, that infirm health occasioned his father, in obedience to the superstition of the day, to send him to Modwenna, a religious lady in Ireland, celebrated into sanctity, such an expedition must, by its new scenes, have kept his curiosity alive, and have amplified his information."—*Turner's Hist. of the Anglo-Saxons*, book ii. chap. viii. Mr. Turner cites as the authorities for this supposition, *Hist. Aurea Johann. Tinmuth. MSS. in Bib. Bodl.*, and the chronicler Higden. He might have found others, and still stronger, in the following passage of Usher:—"Ut de Polydoro Vergilio et Nicolao Harpsfeldio nihil dicam, qui nono post Christum seculo *Modvennan* et *Ositham* floruisse volunt, illos secuti auctores, qui *Alfredum filium regis Anglorum* a Monennâ vel Modwennâ nostrâ gravi quo laborabat morbo liberatum magnum illum Aluredum, &c. &c."—*De Brit. Eccles. Primord.* The cure, here said to have been performed on Alfred by Modwenna, is mentioned also by Hanmer. Unluckily Asser, in his Life of Alfred, a work worthy of its noble subject, makes no mention of the visit of his hero to Ireland; and it is most probable that some confusion between the great Alfred and a king of the Northumbrian Britons, named Aldfrid, who really did pass some years of exile in Ireland (see p. 144, of this Work,) may have given rise to the tradition mentioned in the text. There is still extant an Irish poem, said to have been written by the Northumbrian king during his banishment, which the reader, curious in such matters, may find in Hardiman's *Irish Minstrelsy*, vol. ii. notes; though of the genuineness of this poem, it is right to add, Dr. O'Connor gives the following cautious opinion:—"Ego minime asseram genuinum esse Alfredi fœtus."—*Annotat. &c.*

† "This was a collection (says Mr. O'Reilly) of Irish records, in prose and verse, transcribed from more ancient documents, such as the Psalter of Tarah, &c. It contained also many original pieces, some of them written by Cormac himself. This book was extant in Limerick in the year 1712, as appears by a large folio MS. in the Irish language, preserved in the library of Cashel, written in Limerick in that year, and partly transcribed from the original Psalter of Cashel." The writer adds:—"The original Psalter of Cashel was long supposed to be lost, but it is now said to be deposited in the British Museum."—*Transactions of the Iberno-Celt. Society.* In the time of Sir James Ware this work was, according to his account, "yet extant, and held in high esteem;" and that some manuscript, professing to be this Psalter, was in the hands of Mr. Astle, appears from his own declaration:—"The oldest Irish MS. which we have discovered is the Psalter of Cashel, written about the end of the tenth century."—*Origin of Writing.* For other particulars respecting this celebrated Psalter, see Nicholson, *Irish Hist. Lib.*, Charles O'Connor's *Reflections*, &c. (*Collectan. de Reb. Hib.*, vol. iii.) and Stillingfleet, *Orig. Britann.* 274, 275, &c.

‡ Thus Harris, in speaking of St. Malachy;—"He built a stone oratory at Banchor, which is said to be the first of the sort that was erected in Ireland." (Ware's Bishops, *at Malachy O'Morgair.*) In the Annals of Ulster, however, for the year 788, there is express mention of a stone oratory at Armagh; and a stone church is said, by the Four Masters, to have been built at Clonmacnois by the monarch, Flann Siona, in 904. In the following century the instances of such architecture are numerous; and a large church of Armagh is described, in 1020, as being not only constructed of stone, but having a leaden roof,—"In Damliacc mor con a thuighi do luaighe."—*Annal. Ult.*

§ *Historical and Critical Inquiry into the Origin and Primitive Use of the Irish Pillar Tower*, by Colonel Hervey de Montmorency-Morris. Sir Richard Hoare, too, in speaking of Cormac's chapel, says, "Its masonary, architecture, and ornaments, are certainly the production of a very early age; and the Round Tower was probably erected at or near the same period." See for notice of this very untenable hypothesis respecting the Mound Towers, p. 39, of this Work.

pressed by the people at the unusualness of the sight, stone buildings being then a novelty in that part of the country.* A few years later, too, (1161,) when Roderic O'Connor, King of Connaught, erected a palace or castle of stone at Tuam, so much surprise did the building excite in the natives, that it became celebrated among them under the name of the Wonderful Castle.

Notwithstanding all this, the remains still existing in Ireland of stone structures, manifestly of great antiquity, leave not a doubt that the art of building with cemented stone was, however rarely, yet very early practised in this country. Without laying much stress on the instance afforded in the ancient Damliag, or House of Stone, said to have been erected by St. Kienan as early as the fifth century, some of the ruins in the valley of Glendalough, and parts of the small church of St. Doulach, near Dublin, present features of remote antiquity which prove them to be of a much earlier date than the chapel of Cormac at Cashel; this latter structure being clearly a specimen of the more ornate stage of that old, circular style of architecture (called Saxon, but evidently a corruption of the Roman, or Grecian†) which, in the church of St. Doulach, is seen in its ruder and yet undecorated form. It may be remarked, as peculiar to these ancient Irish churches, that their roofs are of stone; and that the crypts, instead of being subterranean, as in the ancient British churches, are situated aloft between the ceiling and the angular roof of stone.

A certain perverse school of antiquarians, who take pleasure in attributing the credit of Ireland's remains to any other race of people than her own, finding it in vain to deny that buildings of cemented stone were existing among them in the ninth century, have, without a shadow of proof, ascribed all these early structures to the Danes. How entirely groundless is the supposition that the Round Towers were the work of these foreign marauders, has already been sufficiently shown; and the hypothesis, assigning to them the curious stone-roofed chapels, the mysterious sculptures in Glendalough, and other such early ecclesiastical remains, is to the full as gratuitous and absurd. It appears to be questionable, indeed, whether there exist any vestiges of stone buildings at present in Ireland that can, on any satisfactory grounds, be ascribed to the Northmen;‡ and it is probable that those raths, or earthern-works, raised as military defences, in the construction of which they took for models the artificial mounds used as fortresses by the natives, are the only remains of any description that can, with tolerable certainty, be ascribed to Danish workmanship.

In the life of King Cormac there occur some circumstances connected with the ecclesiastical affairs of his time, which might justify a brief review of the condition of the Irish church at this period. But, as a more fitting occasion will be found for such an inquiry, I shall here content myself with calling attention, for a short space, to a peculiar body of ecclesiastics called Culdees, who about this time make their first appearance in Irish history; though, in order to serve the purposes of religious party, it has been pretended by some writers that they took their rise in North Britain as early as the beginning of the fourth century; while others, by a somewhat more plausible hypothesis, place the time of their origin about the middle of the sixth.

With respect to the first of these wholly ungrounded assumptions, nothing farther need

* "Visum est Malachiæ debere construi in Benchor oratorium lapideum instar illorum quæ in aliis regionibus extructa conspexerat. Et cum cœpisset jacere fundamenta, indigenæ quidem mirati sunt, quod in terrâ illâ necdum ejusmodi ædificia invenirentur."—*S. Bernard. in Vit. Malach.*

† "That the species of building which we call Saxon, or Anglo-Norman, and of which this island (England) possesses the most magnificent examples, was, in fact, intended as an imitation of Roman architecture, cannot be doubted."—*Whittington on Gothic Architecture.* Another writer, well acquainted with ecclesiastical architecture, says of the heavy, circular manner of building. "It is called the Saxon style, merely because it prevailed during their dynasty in Britain; but, in fact, it is the Grecian or Roman style, having the essential characters of that style, though, in consequence of the general decline of the arts, rudely executed."—*Milner's Treatise, &c.*

The following tribute to the ecclesiastical antiquities of Ireland comes from an authority of high value on such subjects:—"The stone chapel of Cormac at Cashel is no where to be surpassed, and is itself a host in point of remote and singular antiquity; and though her monastic architecture may fall short, both in design and execution, and be obliged to yield the palm of superiority to the sister kingdoms, yet Ireland, in her stone roofed chapels, Round Towers, and rich crosses, may justly boast of singularities unknown and unpossessed by either of them"—*Sir R. C. Hoare, Tour in Ireland.* Of the two crosses at Monasterboyce, the same writer says, "They are by far the finest examples, and the richest in their sculpture, of any I have ever yet seen."

‡ "There are at present scarcely any traces of stone buildings which can, with a satisfactory calculation of correctness, be ascribed to a Danish origin . . . . . and the examiner who is averse to the indulgence of conjecture in antiquarian inquiries, will perhaps believe that the only military vestiges, satisfactorily attributed to the Danes, are the earth-works usually denominated Raths"—*Brewer's Beauties of Ireland.*

"Some of these high moats, (says the late Mr William Tighe,) particularly those that have any appearance of a fence round the summit, may be properly attributed to the Danes; and one of these seems to derive its name from them,—that of Lister-lin, Fort of the Easterlins or Danes."—*W. Tighe's Survey of the County of Kilkenny*, 631.

be said to mark its true character and object, than that it came from the same mint of fiction* which sent forth the forty counterfeit kings of Scotland; being obviously invented to provide for that series of imaginary monarchs a no less shadowy array of priesthood under the denomination of Culdees. But the weak fable of the Forty Kings having been in the course of time abandoned, the date of the origin of the Culdees was in like manner relinquished, or rather was shifted, more conveniently, to about the middle of the sixth century, when the celebrated Irish saint, Columba, was assumed as the founder of their order.† Among a select body of believers surrounding this holy man at Iona, were preserved pure, as we are told, from the flood of Romanism which was then inundating all the rest of the British Isles, not only the primitive doctrines and principles of Christianity, but also, according to some upholders of the hypothesis, the orthodox system of church government, as prescribed and established in the pure apostolic times.

It is almost needless to say, that, for all this crude speculation of there having existed, so early as the sixth century, any distinct body of ecclesiastics called Culdees, holding doctrines different, in any respect, from those of the clergy in general of Ireland and North Britain, there is not the slightest foundation in fact;—the polemic object of the fiction being the only part of it that is at all consistent or intelligible. How vague and shallow were the grounds on which the whole scheme rested, may be judged from the fact that while, by one party or section of its upholders, the Culdees of Iona were claimed as models of presbyterianism, they were held up by another party, with equal confidence, as most exemplary episcopalians. It may be added also, as conclusive against the existence of any authority for this fable, that neither in Adamnan's Life of Columba, nor in any other of the numerous records of that saint, is the slightest mention made of Culdees, or of any religious body answering to their description; and that Bede,‡ who refers so frequently to the affairs of Iona, and the proceedings of the Columbian monks, not only is silent as to the existence of Culdees at that period,§ but has said nothing whatever that can be interpreted as in the remotest degree implying their existence.

As far as certainty can be attained in the history of this community, which, like many other such objects of research, owes its chief fame and interest to the obscurity still encircling it, the Culdees appear to have been one of those new religious orders or communities which a change of discipline, either general, or in particular churches, was from time to time the means of introducing; and it seems pretty certain that neither in Scotland nor in Ireland did they make their appearance earlier than the ninth century. With respect to their functions, they were evidently secular clergy, attached to the cathedrals of dioceses, and performing the office of dean and chapter to the episcopate; and while in North Britain they in general superseded those communities of monks by which the

* "The first author of it," says Bishop Lloyd, "is one that was much given to such things, John of Fordun." In the Scotichronicon of this fabler is to be found the source as well of the Forty Kings as of the pretended antiquity of the Culdees; and, in both fictions, he is followed by his countryman, Buchanan, who refers the origin of this latter community to no less early a period than the time of Diocletian.—*Rer. Scot.* lib. iv.

† From a mistaken notion that Columba and his successors did not consider bishops necessary for the ordaining of priests, the later Scotch writers, improving on the original fiction, converted all their Columbian Culdees into presbyterians; while Ledwich, and others of his school, claim this imaginary sect with which they have peopled the cells of Hy, as sound episcopalians. To crown all, the venerable Dr. O'Connor, who allowed himself to be haunted too much by Druidism in his antiquarian speculations supposes the Culdees to have been the remains of that ancient priesthood, retaining still, in their Christian profession, some vestiges of paganism, and by the austerity of their lives, and occasional display of false miracles, deluding and dazzling the credulous multitude. His only foundation for this fancy appears to have been a record in the Annals of the Four Masters, for the year 806 (the earliest mention, I believe, of Culdeeism in our history,) where it is said, that "a Culdee had arrived, in that year, from beyond the sea, and with dry feet, though he had not come in any ship; and that, at the same time, there had come down a written proclamation from heaven."

While such have been the inventions broached on this subject, it is right to add, that by two learned divines, Dr. Lloyd, the celebrated Bishop of St. Asaph, and, in our own times, Dr. Lanigan, the subject has been treated in a manner combining at once sound learning and common sense;—both the protestant prelate and the Roman catholic priest having contributed successfully their joint efforts to demolish the silly and dishonest fictions that had been conjured up out of this antiquarian topic.

‡ In the whole history of the tricks of controversy, there can be found few more coolly audacious than that which the Rev. Dr. Ledwich has practised (*Antiq. of Ireland.*) in assuming the authority of Bede as expressly sanctioning his own favourite hypothesis, respecting the identity of the Columbian monks and the Culdees. Himself, as it appears, being satisfied of this identity, he makes no scruple of applying to the latter body all that Bede has stated solely of the former. Accordingly, such passages as the following occur frequently in his argument:—"Bede, though closely attached to the see of Rome, yet with candour and truth confesses the merits of the Culdees:"—Bede, all the time, be it observed, having said nothing concerning Culdees whatsoever! How successfully, however, this air of confidence imposes on others, may be seen by reference to the article "Culdees," in Rees's Cyclopædia, where the writer, fed, it is clear, from this fountain of truth, thus plausibly improves on his original:—"Few writers have done justice to the Culdees . . . . even Bede, venerable as he was, though he bestows upon them great and just commendation, cannot avoid passing some censure upon them, and seems to have regarded them as schismatics, in the worst sense of that word."

§ "Selden (says Lloyd) who is, for aught I know, the first that brought this instance of the Culdees into the controversy, yet acknowledges that in Bede there is no mention of them." Not willing to be left behind in any species of forgery, Macpherson, in his pretended Ossian, has turned St. Patrick into a Culdee.—See *Transact. Royal Irish Academy* for 1787.

cathedrals had hitherto been served, in Ireland the usual fidelity to old customs prevailed, and the monks were in but few instances displaced for the new Culdean chapters.*

There occurs more than once in the records of this century some mention of a law relating to ecclesiastical property, which, as much importance appears to have been attached to it, requires some passing notice. It would appear that the revenue arising from those dues, which had ever since the time of St. Patrick been paid to the church of Armagh, was, amidst the convulsions of this period, interrupted or withheld; and, in the year 824, we find the authority of the warlike Feidhlim, King of Munster, interposed in aid of Artrigius, Archbishop of Armagh, for the collection of this tax.† A law had been established, indeed, about the year 731, by the King of all Ireland and the King of Munster in concert, to regulate the payment of the revenue of the pramatial see;‡ and it is manifestly this regulation we read of, in the annals of the ninth century, as enforced under the name of "the Law of St. Patrick."

Among those bishops who held the see of Armagh during this century, there occurs one named Cathasach, who is styled Prince of Armagh;—a distinction traced by some writers to a practice which prevailed in the early ages, of calling bishops the Princes of the People, or of the Church.§ But there appears no reason why, upon this supposition, the title should not have been extended as well to every other bishop of the see. It seems, therefore, probable, that those so designated were really chieftains, as well as bishops, of Armagh; and that to the encroachments of these powerful dynasts, who, as lords of the soil, claimed a temporal right over the see,‖ is to be ascribed the irreverent anomaly which, at a later period we shall have to record, of no less than eight laymen usurping in turn the primacy, and seating themselves intrusively in the hallowed chair of St. Patrick.

CHAPTER XIX.

Accounts of the Danish Transactions in Ireland, meager and obscure.—Confusion of Dates and Names.—Ragner Lodbrog.—Traditions concerning him.—Reign of the Monarch Niell Glundubh.—His successor, Donogh.—Heroic character of the Roydamna, Murkertach.—His victories over the Danes.—Exploits of Callachan, King of Cashel.—Alliances between the Northmen and the Irish.—Their confederacy at the Great Battle of Brunanburh.—Norse account of that Battle.—Irish mode of Fighting.—Triumphal progress of the Roydamna through the kingdom.—Takes Callachan of Cashel prisoner.—Death of the Roydamna.

THE extent and importance of the possessions of the Northmen in Ireland, and the footing maintained by them, with few interruptions for so many centuries, in all the strongest maritime cities of the island, gives them a claim on the notice of a historian of this country, which has but seldom been sufficiently regarded. One of the chief reasons of this neglect is to be found in the obscurity which involves the affairs of these foreigners, more especially at the early period of their settlement, when the meager knowledge of their transactions, gleaned from our annals, is confined to a list of their acts of outrage on the different monasteries and their holy inmates;—acts of more deep and immediate interest to the monkish writers of such records, than were any of those general events and movements by which posterity was to be affected.

* Lanigan, *Ecclesiast. Hist.* chap. 31. Lloyd *On Church Government*, chap. 7. Chalmer's *Caledonia*, book iii. chap. 8. Usher, *Eccles. Primord*, p. 637, &c.

† iv. Mag. ad ann. 822. 824.

‡ Harris, on Ware's *Bishops* at *Artrigius*.

§ "St. Hilary, in his Commentary on St. Matthew's Gospel, expressly calls bishops Principes Populi, the Princes of the People; and St. Augustin, in his Commentary on the Forty-fourth Psalm, tells us that it grew into use in the early ages, to call all bishops Ecclesiæ Principes. But that the Archbishops of Armagh should be called so, might be owing to another reason, viz. because they sat in the principal metropolis, and were constituted over the rest of the clergy of the whole kingdom; as the supreme moderators of the Jewish church were called Principes Sacerdotum."—Harris on Ware, *Bishops, at Catseach*.

‖ "This family was most probably that of the dynasts of the district of Armagh, whose ancestor Daire had granted to St. Patrick the ground on which the church and other religious buildings, &c., of that city, had been erected."—*Lanigan, Eccles. Hist.* c. xxii. § 13.

While thus our own sources of information let in so little light upon that period, the records of the Scandinavians themselves leave it no less involved and dark. The first adventurers from the shores of the Baltic to the British Isles, were all obscure and nameless sea-rovers; men who, born in the dawn of their country's history, have furnished materials only for legend and song. It was, indeed, out of the real achievements performed by these first adventurers during the eighth and ninth centuries,* that arose the fanciful tales of Icelandic chroniclers respecting the sea-king, Ragner Lodbrok, and his miraculous coat of mail, his fairy wife, who had been found cradled in a golden harp on the sea-shore,† and his numerous sons sweeping the waters with their fleet of 2000 sail. Towards the close, however, of this century, when the submission of all the Northmen in Ireland to one common king of their own race, reigning in Dublin, had, if not concentrated, afforded a rallying point for their scattered force, the operations and policy of their chiefs become more distinctly traceable. Instead of a confused horde of invaders, they begin to assume the shape of a regular community; and their kings, reigning in due succession, and forming alliances and intermarriages, stand forth to the eye as authentic and responsible personages of history.

The chieftain, Ivar, known by his enterprises against North Britain, in conjunction with his brother Anlaf, is, in the record of his death preserved by the annalists of Ulster (A. D. 872,) described as king of all the Northmen of Ireland and of Britain. In conformity with this statement, we find the same Ivar represented by English historians as at that period wielding the sceptre of Northumberland, and assisting Ingwar and Ubbo, two of the sons of the hero Ragnar, in their enterprises against the Anglo-Saxons. But there is mixed up with most of these accounts of the warfare of the Danes in Northumbria, too much of the fabulous matter of the Sagas to entitle them to be received as history; and the union of the crowns of Northumbria and Dublin on the head of one Danish chief, wears all the appearance of being but an anticipation of what really, as we shall find, took place some years later. One chief cause of the frequent confusion, as well of periods as of persons, which occurs in the accounts of the transactions of the Danes in the British Isles, arises from the circumstance of so many of their distinguished chieftains having been called by the same names; the two most popular and frequent of these favourite names having been Ivar and Anlaf.‡

In the second year of the tenth century the expulsion of the Danes from Dublin, by the people of Leinster,§ interrupted for a short time their possession of that seat of power. But, by means of the resources they could command from England, from the Orkneys, and the other isles, they were soon enabled to regain all their former dominion. In the course of but a few years we find Godfred, the grandson of Ivar, taking possession of Dublin;‖ and, shortly after, ranging with his fleet the southern coast of Ireland, and receiving hostages, in token of submission, from the native princes of that quarter.

A. D. 902.

The monarch who filled the throne of Ireland at the commencement of this century was, as we have already seen, Flan Siona, the second husband¶ of the Princess Malmaria, Keneth Mac Alpine's daughter; and this lady, through the progeny of her double marriage, was the means of uniting the three most powerful branches of the Hy-Niells. Scarcely had Flan been seated upon the throne, when he availed himself of the aid of Danish mercenaries to attack and wantonly lay waste the province of Munster. After a long reign of thirty-seven years, this monarch was succeeded in the throne by Niell Glundubh,** a prince who may be regarded as the common father of the family of O'Niell, so long celebrated in our annals; and his short reign, which was, for a wonder, unsullied by the disgrace of alliance with the foreigner, was termi-

A. D. 917.

* "Some of the apparent incongruities of the Sagas may be diminished by the supposition, that the exploits thus commemorated are traditionary accounts of the conquests really effected by the Angles on the eastern coast, and in Northumbria, exaggerated and confused by the fancy or invention of the Scalds."—*Palgrave, English Commonwealth*, c. 18.

† His wife, Aslang. The tradition of this fable was as follows:—"Etenim tractus illius incolæ constanter referunt, seque à majoribus suis accepisse perhibent, inventam apud se in exiguo quodam sinu angulove maris citharam auream, cujus cavitati inclusa fuerit parvula virgo."—*Series Reg. Dan.* l. iv. c. 4.

‡ The various modes also of spelling the name Anlaf, add not a little to the confusion. Thus, in the Irish annals, it assumes the various forms of Amlaim, Amlaiph, Amblaith, Olave, &c. In some of the Sagas it is Olafr; and, by the English chroniclers, it is made Aulaf, Anlaf, Anlavus, Analaph, and Onlaf. See Turner, book vi. c. 2. note 21.

§ Annal. Ult. ad an. 901 (902,) and Annal. Inisfall. ad an. 902.

‖ Annal. Inisfall. 907.

¶ Her first husband was Domnald Mac Aod, Prince of Allichia, in Inesowen.

** *i. e.* of the Black Knee.

nated, together with his life, in a sanguinary battle against the Danes. After the death of Niell,* the sceptre passed, according to the order of alternate succession, into the hands of Donogh, a prince of the other branch of the Hy-Niell family; and Murkertach, the son of the late monarch, became the Roydamna, or heir apparent, of his successor. A. D. 92.

During the dark and troubled transactions of this reign, which lasted for the space of five-and twenty years, the two personages who stand forth the most prominently in our annals are the Roydamna, Murkertach, and the famous Callachan, King of Cashel; princes who, opposed to each other in character and in policy, may be aptly referred to as affording, in their respective careers, a fair sample as well of the vices as the virtues by which the chieftains of that turbulent period were characterized. The first great achievement of the Roydamna was a signal victory over the Danes, or Pirates of the Lakes,† in Ulster; on which occasion eighty of the Danish chieftains were slaughtered, and among them, Albdan, the son of Godfred, King of Dublin. The feeble remains of the defeated army, driven to a place called the Ford of the Picts,‡ were there surrounded, and on the point, it is added, of perishing by famine, when Godfred himself hastened from Dublin to their relief.§ A. D. 926.

Again, in a few years after, when a force of the Northmen, gaining possession of Loch Erne, laid waste and desolated the whole province of Ulster, "as far as Mount Betha to the west, and Mucnamha to the south,"‖ the gallant Roydamna, coming suddenly upon them, defeated and dispersed their whole force, carrying off with him, as trophies of his victory, 200 heads of the slain.¶ With similar success, in the year 936, notwithstanding some recent differences between the monarch and himself,—such as the Roydamna's position in relation to the throne rendered frequent, and, indeed, inevitable,—Murkertach, forgetting all other considerations in that of the public weal, joined the forces under his command, as Prince of Aileach, with those of the monarch; and, attacking the Northmen in their head-quarters, carried devastation through all their possessions round Dublin, from the city itself, as we are told by the chroniclers, to the Ford of Trustan.** A. D. 931. A. D. 936.

While thus this gallant, and, as far as we can now judge, patriotic and honest prince, was directing all the vigorous means within his power to the one great object of crushing the common foe, the career of his rival, the much more celebrated Callachan, presents a specimen of Irish character the very reverse of this description, and such as, unfortunately, has seldom been wanting in the country, from the days of Agricola to the present. Fighting almost constantly on the side of the Northmen, Callachan imitated also those spoilers of his country in their worst excesses of devastation; and, in one instance, when the venerable monastery of Clonmacnois had been cruelly pillaged and sacked by them, it was again visited with similar horrors in the same year by the King of Cashel.†† With a like disregard both of his country and her religion, Callachan, assisted by the Danes of Waterford, made an irruption into the district of Meath, and sacrilegiously plundering the abbey of Clonenagh, and the ancient church of Cillachie, carried off from those retreats two holy abbots as prisoners.‡‡

* One of the most memorable events of the reign of Niell Glundubh, was his revival (A. D. 915,) of the ancient Taltine Games, or sports, which had of late years, owing to the incursions of the Danes, been very much discontinued. In recording a suspension of these games in the year 872, the Ulster Annals add that it was an event which had never before from early times occurred. These ancient sports, though little more, it is evident, that an annual fair, have been brought by some over zealous antiquarians into juxta-position with the Olympic Games. "Hi enim ludi (says Dr. O'Connor) non minori frequentia nec minori Druidum solemnitate in Hibernia celebrabantur quam Ludi Olympici in Peloponneso." For the use made of these games by the ancient Irish in regulating the length of their year, see chap. iv. p. 50, of this Work.

† So called by the annalists.—See Annal. Inisfall. ad an. 927, where the death of Sitric O'Imar, King of the Black Pirates and the White Pirates, is recorded. The Northmen did not, any more than the ancient Greeks, feel degraded by the appellation of Pirates. In the Odyssey, Nestor inquires of the strangers whom he had been feasting, whether they were merchants or pirates.

‡ "Ath Cruithne."—We have here an instance of that want of precision and definiteness which Pinkerton and others complain of in the Celtic language. The word Cruithne means indifferently either Picts or Harpers; and, accordingly, Dr. O'Connor, who, in his version of the Four Masters, calls the scene of this fight "The Ford of the Picts," in translating the record of the same battle, in the annals of Ulster, makes it "The Ford of the Harpers."

§ iv. Mag. ad ann. 924. Annal Ult. 925. Æræ Com. 926.

‖ iv. Mag. ac an. 931. "Co sliabh Betha siar 7 co Mucnamha fo dheas." I am at a loss to discover what places in Ulster are designated by these names.

¶ This custom of cutting off the heads of fallen enemies, which prevailed originally in Egypt, continued to be practised in Ireland so late as the reign of Henry II.; and Dr. Meyrick (*Inquiry into Ancient Armour.*) amusingly refers to this custom of the Irish, as lending "probability to their Asiatic origin, so earnestly contended for by General Vallancey."

** iv. Mag. ad an. 936.

†† iv. Mag. ad an. 934. (æræ com. 936.)

‡‡ iv. Mag. ad ann. 939.

To achievements like these the whole public life of this bold and unprincipled chief was devoted; nor is there on record more than one single instance in which he is A. D. 939. stated to have fought on the side of his country, or rather against her despoilers;—a defeat of the Danes in the Desies country, with the slaughter of 2000 of their troops, being found attributed to him in the Annals of Inisfallen.* There is little doubt, however, that this single redeeming record is erroneous, and that the people of A. D. 941. the Desies themselves were in reality the victims of his triumph.†

Notwithstanding their feelings and habits of mutual hostility, alliances were frequently formed between the Northmen and the natives, and coalitions were now becoming almost as common among them as conflicts. Thus a dynast of the house of Nieil, named Conang, gained a victory about this time, in concert with the Danes, over the Ulidians, a people of the present county of Down; in consequence of which, the king of that district, Matudan, called in also the aid of the Northmen, and, in his turn, carried into the plains of the north the horrors of fire and sword.

But, among the instances of such confederacy, during this century, by far the most memorable was that exhibited at the battle of Brunanburh, in Northumbria; when A. D. 937. the brave Anlaf, King of Dublin, and likewise of Northumbria, joining in the powerful league then formed against the Anglo-Saxon king, Athelstan, led an immense army of Northmen and Irish to the encounter,‡ having entered the Humber, it is said, with a fleet of 615 sail.§ At the head of the forces collected for this formidable invasion was Constantine, King of Albany, whose daughter Anlaf had married; and the battle which decided the fate of their enterprise, and which has been described in detail both by Danish and Anglo-Saxon chroniclers, was considered, for length of duration and amount of slaughter, to be without parallel in English history.‖ After a contest maintained with alternate success from dawn until sunset, victory declared at length in favour of the fortunate Athelstan, who from thenceforth reigned, without a competitor, the first acknowledged English king. A retreat to their shipping, which they were able to effect with the wreck of their army, was all that remained to the vanquished Constantine and his son-in-law; and Anlaf, dislodged by this signal disaster from his Northumbrian throne, returned defeated, but, as will be seen, not subdued, to Ireland.

In the Saga of Egil, which contains the Norse account of this great battle—detailed with a minuteness rather suspicious—we find some particulars respecting the Irish troops engaged in the action, which, as characteristic of that people, are worthy of some notice. One of the Vikingrs, or northern sea-kings, who held a command on the side of Athelstan, is represented, in disposing his forces for action, to have appointed a particular battalion to engage the Scots or Irish, who, it is added, never fought in any regular order; but keeping constantly in motion, from one part of the field to the other, did often much damage to those whom they found off their guard; but, on being opposed, with the same alertness again retreated.¶ We have here an exact picture of the mode of fighting practised by the Kerns, or light-armed infantry of the Irish, whose remarkable activity in returning constantly to the attack, together with their dexterous use of the missile weapons, rendered them a force, as even Giraldus acknowledges, not a little formidable.**

* Inisfall. ad ann. 941.

† The Four Masters, who, in matters relating to Munster, are in general far more trustworthy than the Annals of Inisfallen, state that in the course of the same year (941,) two successive battles were fought between Callachan and the people of the Desies, in the first of which the latter were defeated, with the slaughter of two thousand of their troops, but in the second, being assisted by the people of Ossory, they gained a complete victory over him.

‡ The departure of the Danes from Dublin on this expedition "into Saxony," is recorded by the Four Masters, ad an. 935. (æræ com. 937.)

§ Turner, Hist. of Anglo-Saxons (book vi. chap 2.,) who gives as his authorities, the Chronicle of Mailros. Simeon of Durham, and Hoveden.

‖ Unde usque ad præsens bellum prænominatur magnum —*Ethelwerdi Historia.* "The bloodiest fight, say authors, that ever this island saw."—Milton, *History of Britain.*

¶ Thus in Johnstone's version. (*Antiq Scandæ-Celt.*,) "Scoti enim solent mobiles esse in acie; huc illuc discurrunt, diversisque partibus incursantes, incautis sæpe damnum afferunt; si autem obsistitur illis fugaces existunt." Giraldus has described, in pretty much the same terms, the peculiar manœuvres of the Kerns: "Quatenus et lapidum (quorum irtibus graves et armatos cominus appetere solent, et *indemnes agilitatis beneficio, crebris accedere vicibus et abscedere,*) è diverso eminus sagittis injuria propulsetur."—*Hibern. Expug.* lib. ii. c. 36

** In professing to follow the northern account of this battle, Mr. Turner has, I must say, dealt rather unfairly as well by the meaning of his authority, as by the character of the Irish soldiery. The troops of this nation engaged on that occasion he represents as an "irregular" and "disorderly" force, "who always flew from point to point, no where steady, yet often injuring the unguarded." But assuredly the account given of the mode of fighting of the Irish Kerns, both in Egil's Saga, and the passage of Giraldus just cited, conveys a totally different notion of that light, agile, and constantly harassing force. In the part of his description, too, where professedly following the Saga, Mr. Turner speaks of the battalia of Thorolf, as "consisting of the *disorderly* Irish," there is not, in the original as rendered by Johnstone, the slightest grounds for this disparaging epithet.

In the Anglo-Saxon poem, commemorative of the battle of Brunanburh, there occur some verses which have been, rather too sanguinely, interpreted as containing a eulogium upon the character of the Irish people; whereas, so hopelessly vague and obscure are the structure and language of these verses, that they leave full scope for every possible variety of conjecture as to their meaning; and the opinion given of them long since by the poet Milton,* ought to have deterred all such rash attempts to sound their fathomless obscurity. As the supposed eulogy, however, upon the Irish, which has been conjured up out of them, is at least not undeserved, the passage, as rendered according to this view, may here be cited. After stating that Constantine left his own son on the field of battle, the poet is made to say that "neither was there aught for *the yellow-haired race, the bold in battle, and the ancient in genius*, to glory in; nor had Olaf, and the remains of the army, any reason to boast. . . . . The sad remainder, in the resounding sea, passed over the depths of the waves to Dublin."†

In about seven years after his defeat on the field of Brunanburh, the gallant Anlaf, finding the course for his daring ambition again thrown open by the death of Athelstan, renewed his pretensions to the Northumbrian throne; and, having been invited over from Ireland with that view, was appointed by the people of Northumbria their sovereign. Among the numerous errors occasioned by so many Danish princes bearing the name of Anlaf, may be reckoned the opinion entertained by some writers, that the brave competitor of Athelstan and of Edmund, just mentioned, was the same Anlaf whose name is found on an ancient Irish coin accompanied by a figure of the cross, denoting that the king, by whose orders this coin had been struck, was a Christian.‡ For this supposition, however, there appears not to be any foundation; as it was not till near seven years after the death of Anlaf of Brunanburh that the Danes of Dublin, to use the language of our annals, "received the faith of Christ and were baptized." The coin in question, therefore, must have belonged to the reign of a later prince of the same name.

It was about the year 948 that the conversion of the Danes of Dublin to the Christian faith is, in general, supposed to have taken place.§ The Northmen of that city were, it is supposed, the first of their nation in Ireland who, in any great numbers, embraced the doctrines of the Gospel; but so little change did this conversion work in their general character,‖ that, were there not an express record of the fact, it would not be easy for a reader of their history to discover that they were not still immersed in all the darkness of heathenism. One early proof of religious zeal they indeed afforded, if it be true, as some historians state, that the celebrated abbey of St. Mary was founded by them in the neighbourhood of Dublin this very year.¶

Prosperous as appeared to be, in many respects, the affairs of the Irish Danes at this crisis, and vast as was the command of resources which their possession of all the chief seaports gave them, it is clear that the tenure of their power, however great its extent, was never for a single day certain or undisturbed. The indefatigable activity and bravery of the Irish people left not a moment of repose or security to their invaders; and though but too often, at the call of cupidity or revenge, the ever ready sword was drawn on the side of the foreigners,—though there were even found, as in the case of the Leinster men, large bodies of the natives almost habitually traitors, it is evident that the great mass of the population never ceased to resist, that they were strong in revenge

* "To describe which (battle) the Saxon annalist (who is wont to be sober and succinct) whether the same or another writer, now labouring under the weight of his argument, and overcharged, runs on a sudden into such extravagant fancies and metaphors as bear him quite beside the scope of being understood."—Milton, *History of Britain*.

† The reader needs but to turn to the different versions of this passage by Gibson, Ingram, Turner, and Price, to perceive how utterly hopeless is the attempt to arrive at its real meaning; and of how little worth is the compliment to the Irish that has been extorted from it. He will find that the "yellow-haired youth," or "nation," which figures so poetically in the version of three of these interpreters, is, in that of the fourth, transformed into a "grizzly-headed old deceiver."

If the Celtic tongue, as above intimated, be open to the charge of vagueness and want of precision, what is to be said of this specimen of the Gothic?

‡ For an account of this silver coin, see Ware's *Antiquities*, ch. xxxii., and Simon's *Essay on Irish Coins*. The whole subject of the coins supposed to have been struck in Ireland about this period, is beset with difficulty and obscurity; but, in the writers just quoted, in Bishop Nicholson's *Historical Library*, ch. viii., and in Kedar's "Nummorum in Hibernia Cusorum, &c.:" a work compiled chiefly from the foregoing, the reader will find all that is known and conjectured on the subject. See also a note by Dr. O'Connor, on the Ulster Annals, ad an. 937, and Dr. Lanigan, ch. xxii, note 138.

§ Ware, *Antiq.* chap. xxiv. ad ann. 948.

‖ The insincerity of the conversion of the Danes of England is thus strongly represented by the author of the History of the Descent of the Normans:—"Plusieurs prirent, moyennant quelques concessions de terre, le titre et l'emploi de défenseurs perpétuels des églises qu'eux mêmes avoient brûlées; d'autres revêtirent l'habit de prêtres, et conservoient sous cet habit le fouge et la dureté d'âme des brigands de mer."

¶ Ware, in *loc. citat.* Lanigan, chap. xxii. § 12. Archdall, *Monastic. Hibern.* at *Dublin*. See for the churches dedicated by them to their own saints, St. Olave, St. Michan, &c., Mr. W. M Mason's *History of St. Patrick's Cathedral*.

and hatred against their oppressors, and wanted but one combined and vigorous effort to rid themselves of the yoke.

To go through all the monotonous details of battles and scenes of pillage which form the staple of the Irish records for this century, would be to render these pages like a confused and deathful dream. All those monasteries and religious establishments, which have already been enumerated, as furnishing victims for the Northmen's rage, were again and again visited, during this period, by the still refreshed spirit of cruelty and rapine. The venerable church of Columba, at Kells, the cells of the religious upon the islets of Lough Ree, the sacred edifices of Armagh,* the school of Clonard, renowned for its learning through Europe, and the ancient abbey of Down, the hallowed resting-place of the remains of St. Patrick,—all these memorable and holy structures were, at different times, during this century, and in various forms of violation, profaned and laid desolate.† Therich shrines of Kildare, so frequently before an object of their cupidity, were broken and plundered by these spoilers on the very day sacred to the virgin saint. Even after the Danes themselves had professed to embrace Christianity, they did not the less desecrate and destroy its venerable temples; and, in an attack made by them upon Slane, in the year 950, when they set fire to the church of that ancient place, a number of persons who were at the time assembled in the belfry, among whom was Probus, the historian of St. Patrick, perished miserably in the flames.

It has been observed of the Danes of England, that had they, at the commencement of this century, united the whole of their force under one supreme head, they would have been probably more than a match for the whole power of Edward; and doubtless the same impolitic system of dividing their strength among a number of equal and independent chieftains, which so long delayed their complete conquest of England, was the cause likewise of their ultimate failure in Ireland. For, minute as was in this latter country the subdivision of sovereignty, a yet more multiple form of royalty was adopted by the nations of the north; where, in the times preceding the eighth century, there existed in Norway itself no less than twelve kingdoms; and the small territory around Upsal was under the rule of nineteen different kings.‡

This enfeebling partition of the kingly power continued to be the system adopted by the Northmen in Ireland; and the weakening effects of such a policy were the more felt, from the detached districts they severally occupied, which rendered it still more difficult for them to act with speed and decision in concert. While in England, too, the original affinity between their language,§ and that of the Saxons afforded to the invaders such means of intercourse as greatly facilitated their progress and settlement in the country, the Danes in Ireland were, on the contrary, encountered by a language wholly and essentially different from their own, and forming in itself a complete wall of separation between them and the great mass of the natives. When such and so serious were the disadvantages under which they laboured, and boldly, constantly as every step of their way was contested, it is evident that nothing but a want of unity among the Irish themselves, from the divided nature of their government, the feuds and jealousies among the people, and, too often, the treachery of their princes, could have delayed so long the utter expulsion of the foreign intruder from out the land.

What the Irish wanted at this crisis was evidently the ascendancy of some one potent spirit, who, whether for his own aggrandizement, or from some more lofty motives, would devote ardently the entire energies of his mind to the task of arousing and uniting his fellow-countrymen, so as, by one grand and simultaneous effort, to rid the whole island of the pestilent presence of the foreigner.

It was hardly possible that two such ascendant and stirring spirits as the roydamna and the King of Cashel, should continue to move through the same sphere of action, and generally in adverse directions, without coming at last into collision; and the triumphant ease with which, in the encounter that ensued between them, Murkertach mastered his antagonist, presents one of those instances of what is called poetical justice, which occur

* In 921, when Godfred, King of the Danes of Dublin, attacked and plundered Armagh, he is said to have spared the Churches, the Colidei, or Culdees (who were the officiating clergy of the cathedral,) and the sick.

† See our Annals, *passim*.

‡ "The Herverar Saga mentions that, at one period, there were twelve kingdoms in Norway."—*Turner, Hist. Anglo Sax.*, book iii. c. 1. "In Upsal, nineteen of these petty kingdoms are enumerated."—*Ibid.*

§ Lingua Danorum Anglicanæ loquelæ vicina est.—*Script. Rer. Danic* "The languages (of the Danes and Saxons,) originally kindred, were melted into each other; their ancestors were of the same race, and might have been neighbours in their original seats".—*Mackintosh, Hist. of England*, c. ii. Cas Cyc.

According to a late learned work, however, (Rask's Anglo-Saxon Grammar,) by which a new light appears to have been thrown upon this subject, the Anglo-Saxon deviates considerably from the Danish and other Scandinavian dialects.—See *Preface*.

but too rarely in real history. After a successful course of warfare in different parts of the kingdom, the particulars of which it is unnecessary to dwell upon, the Roydamna proceeded at the head of his troops, and attended by a select band of 1200 warriors* from his own principality, to gather the fruits of his late successes, in the shape of tribute and princely hostages from the conquered. The Danes of Dublin, in acknowledgment of submission, surrendered to him their prince, Sitric; while, from the Lagenians, he not only enforced tribute, but carried away with him as hostage their king, Lorcar. But it was in Munster that the proudest trophy of this triumphal progress† awaited him. Entering boldly into the very territories of his rival, Callachan, he required of the Momonians, no less as a pledge of future fealty than, as an atonement for past transgressions, that they should deliver up their king unconditionally into his hands. This humiliating demand was, after some hesitation and parley, complied with; and the fierce Callachan, led in bondage from his own dominions, was sent soon after by the triumphant Roydamna, with all his other captives and hostages, to the monarch.‡ How long his state of captivity lasted does not very clearly appear; but there occurs once only, after this date, any particular mention of him; and then, faithful to his old habits of intestine warfare, he is found gaining a sanguinary victory at Maighduine, or the Field of the Fortress, over Kennedy, the father of the celebrated Brian Boru.§ A. D. 939.

Murkertach survived but a short time his proud and triumphal circuit throughout the island, and died,‖ as he had for the greater part of his manhood lived, in fierce conflict with the Danes; leaving, as a poet of that day strongly expresses it, all his countrymen orphans.¶ In the record of his death we find him described as "a warrior of the Saffron hue,** and the hero of Western Europe."†† A. D. 43.

It is a fact both curious and instructive, as showing of what materials the idols of the multitude are most frequently fashioned, that while such, as we learn from authentic records, were the respective careers of these two warlike contemporaries, the fame of Callachan, as transmitted by tradition, has far outrun that of his patriotic rival; and that even some modern Irish historians, by whom Murkertach is barely mentioned, have devoted whole pages to the narration of a wild and imaginary adventure related of the King of Cashel.‡‡ For this flimsy tale of romance there exist no grounds whatever in our annals; and the whole fable was probably the invention of some of those poet-historians, or seanachies, of the Eugenian princes, who sought to do honour to their royal masters by embalming in fiction the memory of a chieftain of their race. The very selection, however, of Callachan's name, as a theme for fable, shows that already he stood high in popular fame, having been handed down by tradition as the favourite champion of a period when valour was the virtue most in request; and when it mattered little to the fame of the hero whether he fought on the wrong side or the right, so he but fought boldly and successfully, and with the due heroic disregard to life, as well his own as that of others.

After a reign comprising in its duration nearly a quarter of a century, this year saw another of those shadows of royalty, which occupied in succession the throne of Tara, pass undistinguished into oblivion. This monarch's name, it may be remembered, was Donough; and the annalist, in recording his death, cites a distich inscribed by a poet of the day to his memory, in which the general condition of the A. D. 944.

* IV. Mag. ad an. 939.

† There is still extant a poem on this circuit of Murkertach, said to have been written by a contemporary and friend of that prince, Corbmacan Eigeas, the chief poet of Ulster. The monarch, gratified, we are told, by Murkertach's loyalty, in delivering to him all the hostages, returned them again into his hands, considering him their fittest guardian. "To commemorate this event, and the mighty deeds of his prince, Corbmacan wrote his poem of 256 verses, beginning 'Oh Muircertach, son of worthy Niall, who hast received hostages from Falia's Isle.'"—*Trans. Iberno-Celt. Society.* Mr. O'Reilly adds, that "a copy of this poem is in the O'Clery's Book of Conquests, and in the pedigree of the once royal family of O'Niell, which is in the hands of the assistant secretary of the society."

‡ Annal. Inisfall. ad an. 941.

§ IV. Mag. ad an. 942. Annal. Ult. 943. (*vere* com. 944.)

‖ IV. Mag. ad an. 941. Annal. Ult. ad an. 942 (*vere* com. 943.)

¶ Verses quoted by the Four Masters, in loc.

** The use of this colour in their garments continued to be a favourite fashion with the Irish down to so late a period as the time of Henry VIII., when it was, like all other things Irish, rendered punishable by law; and there is a statute of that reign, forbidding any one to "use or wear any shirt, smocke, kerchor, bendol, neckerchour, mocket, or linnen cappe, coloured or dyed with saffron." See, for some amusing remarks upon this statute, Ledwich's Antiquities "Of the ancient Irish Dress." Campion, who wrote his account of Ireland in the sixteenth century, says, "They have now left their saffron, and learne to wash their shirts four or five times in a yeare."

†† "The *Hector* of Western Europe," as it is in the original of both the annalists above cited,—*Ectoir tartair Eorpa*. According to Dr. O'Connor, however, Ectoir is a very ancient Irish word, signifying *hero*, and compounded, as he rather too fancifully supposes, of *Eacht*, an achievement, and *Oir*, golden, or splendid.

‡‡ On this farrago of fiction Keating has bestowed no less than ten or eleven of his folio pages, while Dr. Warner has filled fourteen of his quarto pages with a verbose dilution of the same trash.

country is thus lamentably, and, we must believe, truly depicted. "Without law to guide her, with rulers treacherous, false, and factious, the realm of Erin hath sunk into darkness."*

Donough was succeeded in the supreme throne by a prince named Congelach, who, but a few months before his accession, had acquired considerable renown by a gallant attack on the city of Dublin, in which, being aided by the rare alliance of the people of Leinster, he reduced that city to a state of ruin and desolation, on which some of the annalists are not unpleased to dwell,† describing the burning of its ships and ramparts, the flower of its warriors laid in the dust, and the blooming youths and venerable matrons all led away in chains. The repeated attacks, indeed, made by the natives upon Dublin, who was again retaken from them as often as they possessed themselves of it, showed with what obstinacy the work of warfare was carried on, and by how little else the attention of either party could have been occupied. In the course of the very next year, Blacar, the Danish king, returning with fresh supplies of force, retook the city. The same alternations of success and reverse were exhibited some few years after, when Godfred, the son of Sitric, having been forced, with the loss, enormous for those times, of no less than 6000 men, to surrender and fly from Dublin, was enabled in like manner, in the course of the following year, to recover his dominions.‡

CHAPTER XX.

Early Life of Brian Boru.—His first Battles under his Brother Mahon.—Defeat.—Victory at Sulchoid.— Murder of Mahon.—Accession of Brian to the Throne of Munster.—Attacks and Defeats the Murderers of his Brother.—Death of the Monarch Congelach.—Domnal, his Successor.—Charter of the English King, Edgar, a Forgery.—Power of the Kingdom of Munster.—Increased considerably under Brian.—Accession of the Monarch Malachy.—Gains a great Victory over the Danes.—Defeat of the People of Leinster by Brian.—Growing Jealousy between this Prince and the Monarch.—Irruption of the latter into Brian's principality.—Cuts down the Sacred Tree of the Dalcassians.—Invades and lays waste Leinster.—An army marched against him by Brian.—Convention between the two Kings.—Joint Victories over the Danes.—Renewal of their mutual hostilities.—Brian invades the Territory of the Monarch.

How far the heroic Murkertach, had he lived to attain the supreme sovereignty, was likely to have succeeded in delivering his country from the foreigner, the imperfect outline we have of his character renders it vain to attempt to speculate. But there had now appeared on the scene of strife a young and enterprising warrior, whose proud destiny it was, at a later period, to become the instrument of effecting this glorious work; and whose whole long life seems to have been a course of maturing preparation for the great achievement he succeeded in accomplishing at its close. This prince, to whose original name, Brian, was added afterwards the distinctive title of Boromh, or Boru,§ was one of the numerous sons of Kennedy, King of Munster;‖ and, at the time of the accession of his brother, Mahon, to the throne of that kingdom, was in his thirty-fourth year. Being by birth a Dalcassian, he had naturally been nursed up, from his earliest days, amidst all those traditional incitements to valour which the history of the chivalrous tribe afforded. Their proverbial character, as always "the first in the field, and the last to leave it," was in itself, as repeated proudly from father to son, a motive and pledge for the continued valour of the whole race. While yet a youth, his high reputation for soldiership had collected around him a number of young followers; with whom, posting

* IV. Mag. ad an. 942 (ær. com. 944.) † Ibid.
‡ IV. Mag. ad an. 948.
§ A surname given to him, according to O'Halloran, M'Curtin, and others, in consequence of the tribute (*Borumha* signifying a tribute of cows and other cattle) which he exacted from the people of Leinster; but derived by others with more probability from the name of the town Borumh, which stood in the neighbourhood of his palace of Kincora in the county of Clare. See O'Brien's Dictionary, in voce *Borumha*.
‖ There is extant a poem, attributed to Mac Liag, the secretary of Brian, giving an account of the "Twelve Sons of chaste Cinneide." (Kennedy.)—*Trans. Iberno-Celt. Society.*

himself at defiles and mountain passes, or lying in wait in the depths of the forest, he frequently intercepted the enemy in their plundering expeditions, or harassed and cut them off in their retreats.*

Upon the accession of his brother Mahon to the throne of Cashel, the constant and active career of warfare in which that intrepid prince engaged, furnished a practical school for the ripening of Brian's military talents, and by inuring him to service in a subordinate rank, rendered him the more fit for the highest. At a memorable slaughter of the Danes, by Mahon, near Lake Gur, it is supposed that Brian, though not expressly mentioned, may have been present; but the first important event connected with his name was an expedition led by Mahon beyond the Shannon, to the districts bordering on Lough Ree. There, by predatory incursions in various directions, they had succeeded in amassing considerable plunder; when Fergal O'Ruarc, with a large army of Conacians, pouring suddenly down upon them, the brother chiefs were compelled reluctantly to retreat. Followed closely as far as the banks of the river Fairglin, they there stood at bay and engaged their pursuers. But Brian's good genius had not yet exempted him from all failure. Notwithstanding the valour of Mahon, and the intrepid bearing of the future hero of Clontarf, the Momonian troops were defeated; and Mahon, forced to swim across the river to save his life, was compelled ingloriously to leave his shield behind him.†

But the victory at Sulchoid over the Danes of Limerick, achieved principally through Brian's skill in partisan warfare, first gave earnest of the successful struggle he was destined to wage against the oppressor. A strong body of cavalry, detached from the Danish force stationed at Sulchoid,‡ having advanced to reconnoitre the army of Mahon, a sudden attack was made upon them by Brian at the head of some squadron of light horse, and with such effect that one half of their number lay dead upon the spot. The remainder fled in confusion, pursued by Brian, to the main body of the army encamped at Sulchoid. Thither Mahon also followed rapidly with the whole of his forces; and a general engagement ensued disastrous to the Danes, of whom no less than 3000 were slaughtered on the spot. The remainder fled, in confused rout towards Limerick, pursued so closely and eagerly that the victors entered the city along with the vanquished, making prisoners of all whom they did not put to the sword; and then, having ransacked that rich city of all its gold and merchandise, they left it a mass of ruins and flames.§ A. D. 969.

There were yet other triumphs, won by the two brothers in concert, on which it is unnecessary here to dwell. To the gallant Mahon, however, the constant success that attended him in all his enterprises proved in the end fatal. A mortified rival, named Maolmua, who, having failed against him in the field, was resolved to accomplish by treachery what he despaired of in fair battle, concerted a plan by which, under the pretence of an amicable meeting for the purpose of conference, he induced the unsuspecting Mahon to trust himself, with a few followers, in his power.‖ Thus unguarded, the king was made prisoner by the traitorous Maolmua and his brother conspirators; and being then hurried away by night to a solitary place in the mountains, was there basely murdered. A. D. 976.

The great importance attached by the Irish, from the earliest periods of their history, to the names and sites of places connected with memorable events, is shown in the instance of the supposed locality of Mahon's murder, which appears to have been as anxiously inquired into as it is variously stated. While some authorities mention, as the scene of the crime, a mountain now called Sliabh-Caon, near Magh-Feine, or the Sacred Plain, and describe the very spot where it was committed as being near the Red Gap, or fissure, in the hill of Caon,¶ there are others which state the murder to have occurred on

* Vallancey (from *Munster Annals*.)—*Law of Tanistry, &c.*

† IV. Mag. ad an. 961 (ær. com. 963.) Vallancey, whose guide is the *Munster Annals*, makes it 965. In the account here given of the result of this battle, I have followed the authority of the Four Masters, which appears to me far more trustworthy than that of the poem cited from the Munster Book by Vallancey, attributing all the victory and the glory to the Munster hero. On the incident of the shield, it is fair to add, the Four Masters are silent.

‡ "Sulchoid is frequently mentioned in subsequent ages and wars, even as far down as the last campaigns and revolutions that happened in this kingdom, as a noted post for the encampment of armies; being situated in a plain, which is guarded by heights on both sides, within one day's march of Limerick, and in the direct road from Dublin to that town by the way of Cashel."—*Law of Tanistry.*

§ Annal. Inisfall. (God. Bodleian.) ad an. 951. The events in this series of the Inisfallen Annals are in general antedated by fifteen, sixteen, or even a still greater number of years.

‖ Annal. Ult. ad an. 975.

¶ Annal. Inisfall. ad an. 976. "In my copy of the Inisfallenses," says Vallancey, "*Bearna-Buaraf*, now *Red-Chair*, on the mountain which was then called Sliabh-Caoin, but now *Sliabh-Riach*, between the barony of Fermoy and the county of Limerick, is said to be the pass on which Maolmuadh and his brothers waited for the royal captive, and put him to death. But, as this place was much out of their direct road from Bona-

one of the Muskerry mountains, at a place called, from this melancholy event, Leacht-Magama, or Mahon's Grave.

On the death of this prince, his brother Brian, who had held for some time the subordinate sovereignty of Thomond, or North Munster,* succeeded to the throne of all Munster; and the very first act of justice he felt himself called upon to perform, was the infliction of summary vengeance on the base murderers of his brother. Attacking successively, in the very hearts of their own territories, the two princes, Donovan and Maolmua, who had been chiefly concerned in that treacherous plot, he succeeded, notwithstanding the aid afforded to these traitors by the Danes, in nearly exterminating the whole force of their respective armies.† To his son, Morrough, who in one of these battles, made the first essay of his military prowess, fell the good fortune of encountering, hand to hand, the chief instigator of the base deed, Maolmua, and the glory of sacrificing him upon the spot to the manes of his murdered relative. Respecting the place where this latter victory was gained, there appears to be no less doubt and discussion than with regard to the site of the murder. But, that the battle was fought in the neighbourhood of Mahon's Grave, which is one of the opinions on the subject cited by the annalists, seems highly probable, from the name popularly given to the conflict being Cath Bhealaig-Leachta, or the battle of the Road of the Sepulchre.‡

While engaged in this work of just retribution, Brian found time also to give battle to those Danes who had a few years before taken possession of the isle of Iniscathy, in the mouth of the Shannon; and who, through the aid of the Danes of Limerick, still maintained themselves in that station. This beautiful island, with its eleven churches,§ and the ornamented tomb of its patron saint, Senanus, was one of those favourite places of pilgrimage and penance to which, in defiance of all danger, and even of death itself, religious persons had long continued to resort;‖ and still, as its shrines were enriched with new offerings by these visiters, they became but fresh objects of plunder and outrage. About the middle of this century the Northmen had used Iniscathy as a place of arms; and, in the year 972, Mark, a Danish chieftain, the son of Harold, appears to have established himself in the island. But Brian now landing there, at the head of 1200 of his own brave tribe, the Dalcassians¶ succeeded, though opposed by the Danes of Limerick, under their generals, Ivar, Amlaf, and Duibhan, in recovering the island from the hands of these foreigners; having slain, in the battle which led to this result, the chieftain Mark, and his two sons.** After affecting these important objects, he proceeded to devastate all the other small islands of the Shannon, carrying off with him the treasures and effects of the Danes wherever he found them along those shores.

On the death of the monarch, Congelach (A. D. 956,) who fell in a great battle with the Leinster people and the Danes, he was succeeded by Domnal, the son of the hero, Murkertach, and it was during the long reign of Domnal that the events just recounted took place. In the time of this monarch is placed the date of a pretended charter of the English king Edgar, claiming dominion over "the greatest part of Ireland, together with

van's house to their own home near Bandon, I rather give credit to another designation which I find in an old roll or series of the kings of Munster, with an account of the years of their reigns, and the manner of their death; wherein it is mentioned that Mahon was murdered on the mountain of Mussiry, near Macroomp, at a place called Leacht Mhaghthamhna, or the Grave of Mahon, from his name. This place lies in the direct line between the places where Maolmuadh and Donovan (the murderers) had their residence."—*Law of Tanistry, &c.*

The reader has here, in the name, *Mhaghthamhna*, a specimen, in addition to some others which I have already given, of the absurd mode of spelling by which the Irish language is disfigured. This heap of consonants is pronounced simply *Magama*. I have before given the instance of Tigernach, which, in pronunciation, is softened into the graceful name of Tierna.

The Inisfallen annalist, in noticing the different opinions as to the site of the murder, refers to a work which he calls "The History of the Saints of the Race of Conary."

* In the same manner, Mahon had enjoyed for some time the principality of Thomond before, in the course of succession, he was elevated to the sovereignty over all Munster.

† Annal. Inisfall. ad an. 978.—IV. Mag. ad an. 976. ‡ Ibid.

§ The remarks of Mac Culloch, in speaking of the Western Isles, with respect to the proofs they afford of the strength and ardour of the religious feeling in early times, are equally applicable to the isle of Iniscathy, and its numerous churches and cells. "In comparing the former with the present state of the Western Islands, few circumstances are much more striking than the enormous disproportion of their religious establishments at that period; when also, if we may judge from the poverty of the territory, there could be but few temporal motives for such establishments . . . . . Assuredly the rocky and barren mountains of Harris seem to have held out no great temptations beyond those of a spiritual nature, for the erection of twelve churches, while its present population, now, perhaps, more than doubled, would with difficulty fill one."

‖ For an account of this island, see Sir R. C. Hoare's *Tour in Ireland*. "The monument of St. Senan (says Archdall) is still to be seen here, with the remains of eleven small churches, and several cells. In the stone that closes the top of the altar window of the great church, is the head of the Saint, with his mitre boldly executed and but little defaced. An ancient Round Tower of 120 feet in height, and in complete repair, graces the scene. This island is remarkable for the resort of pilgrims on certain festivals." *Monast. Hibern.* at *Inisscattery*. See, for St. Patrick's prophecy respecting Senanus, Usher, *Eccles. Primord*, 874.

¶ Annal. Inisfall. ad an. 977.

** Aarchdall at *Inniscreaty*.

its most noble city, Dublin."* Even were this strange document authentic, which has long ceased to be assumed, the pompous and boastful character of Edgar would account sufficiently for its large pretensions, without having recourse to any more substantial grounds. It is related of him, that when residing once at Chester he obliged eight of his tributary kings to row him in a barge upon the Dee.† But, in the list of the royal liegemen, there is not one from Ireland.

After a reign of twenty-four years, Domnal ended his days in penitence at Armagh,‡ and was succeeded in the throne by Malachy the Great, a prince who, though eminently qualified by character and talents to uphold nobly the Hy-Niell sceptre, was doomed, under the spell of an ascendant genius, to see it pass away from his hands. A. D. 980.

The consequences, moral as well as political, of that endless division and subdivision of kingship§, which formed the principal of the Irish system of government, have been sufficiently dwelt upon and exemplified in the preceding pages. For this distraction of the public counsels and energies, a partial remedy would appear to have been devised, in that two-fold division of the whole island which took place, as we have seen, at rather an early period;—the northern half, Leath Cuinn, being allotted nominally to the monarch, while the southern portion, Leath Mogh, formed the dominions of the king of Cashel. But this improvement, as it might have been deemed, on the ancient quintuple division, while it left all the former sources of dissension still in full play, but added another provocative to strife and rivalry in the second great royal prize, which, by this new distribution of power, was to be held forth to the ambitious. Nor was it from the competition for these two prizes that the mischief chiefly arose,—the lines of succession to them being kept in general distinct,—but from the collision into which the respective parties were brought by their relative position afterwards. Had the monarch possessed a substantial control over the portion of the kingdom allotted to him, such a power, aided by the traditional reverence which still encircled the throne of Tara, might, in difficult conjunctures, have enabled him to enforce his authority with success. But it is clear that, in his mere monarchical capacity, the power of the monarch was only nominal, or, at the best, occasional; and that, in the general struggle for plunder and pre-eminence in which all were alike engaged, his authority depended as much for its enforcement on the amount of troops, alliances, and subsidies he was able to command, as that of any one of those minor kings, over whom he was by courtesy sovereign.

When to this it is added, that the monarchs themselves, considered in their personal characters, were, as may have been judged from the scanty space their names have occupied in these pages, a series, with but few exceptions, of weak and insignificant personages, it will not be thought wonderful that the throne of Munster, filled alternately from among the chiefs of two warlike tribes, each emulous of the other's valour and renown, should in the race of power have gained rapidly on its monarchical rival, and at length outgone and eclipsed it. Throughout the two centuries, indeed, preceding the period we have now reached, the acts and achievements of the kings of Munster furnish the chief material of Irish history; and how far, in the early part of the ninth century, they had already usurped on the power and station of the monarch, may be collected from an historical mistake committed by Giraldus Cambrensis, who, in speaking of Feidlim, the active and ambitious ruler of Munster at that period, was so far deceived by the prominent station this prince occupied, as to style him "king of all Ireland."‖ The several princes, whether Eugenian or Dalcassian, who succeeded Feidlim in the throne of Cashel, continued each to strengthen and advance the aspiring power of the province; till at length, under the military genius of Brian, it received an impulse onward, which not even the talent and public spirit of the monarch, Malachy, could avert: and accordingly, as we shall find, the venerable fabric of the Hy-Niell dynasty, rich as it was in the recollections and associations of nearly 600 years, sunk almost unresistingly beneath the shock.

* "Maximam partem Hiberniæ, cum sua nobilissima civitate Dubliniâ." This charter may be found in Usher's *Sylloge*. The original, he says, is preserved in Worcester Cathedral, and there is a copy of it among the records in the Tower.

† Hume. These eight kings, according to Turner, were "Kenneth III, king of Scotland, Malcolm of Cumbria, Macchus of Anglesey and the Isles, three kings of Wales, and two others."—*Hist. Anglo-Sax.* c. vi. There is extant a charter of Edgar, professing to be signed by Kenneth III,—"Ego Kinadius rex Albaniæ adquievi," which has no less the appearance of being a forgery than the arrogant charter respecting Ireland.

‡ Archdall, who quotes *Annal. Ulunst.*

§ According to Procopius, the practice of bestowing the title of King on mere generals was prevalent among what are called the barbarous nations: Αλλα Ρηξ καλουμενος δικαιως· ουτω γαρ σφιν τους ηγεμονας οι βαρβαροι νομιζουσιν.—Goth. L. 2.

‖ Topog. Hibern. Dist. 3. c. 43.

When raised to the throne, the new monarch, Malachy, was in his thirtieth year; and a victory as important as it was splendid, which he gained over the Danes almost immediately on his accession, threw a lustre of hope and promise around the commencement of his reign. Invaded, in the heart of his own dominions, by the Northmen of Dublin and of the Isles, he not merely repelled the incursion with spirit, but, turning assailant in his turn, attacked the main body of the enemy's force, consisting of Danes collected from all parts of Ireland; and, continuing the conflict with but little interruption for three days and nights, forced them to submit to whatever terms he chose at the sword's point to dictate. Among other conditions, he stipulated for the instant release from captivity of all such natives as were held in bondage by the Danes; and the language of the "noble Proclamation," as it is justly styled, in which he announced to the country this result of his victory, was in substance as follows;—"Let all the Irish who are suffering servitude in the lands of the stranger return now to their several homes, and enjoy themselves in gladness and peace."*

A. D. 980.

How far this declaration of enfranchisement was allowed to have effect throughout the country, does not appear from the records; but the number of hostages, as well as of captives on other grounds, which the Danes, in obedience to this edict, released, is stated to have been no less than 2000, among whom were Domnal, the king of Leinster, and O'Niell, prince of Tirone; while, as a farther proof of submission, all the O'Niells, from the source of the Shannon to the sea, were declared to be exempt from all future payment of supplies or subsidies to the Northmen.† To judge from the results, indeed, attributed to this battle, which was called from the district where it commenced, the battle of Tara, it may be pronounced that, next to the crowning achievements of Brian himself on the glorious field of Clontarf, it was by far the most signal and decisive advantage gained over the Danes during the whole course of their ruinous sway. Besides the immense slaughter of their troops, they had lost likewise nearly all their distinguished captains, and among them Reginald, the son of Anlaf, their king;‡ a loss which, combined with the humiliating sense of defeat, so deeply affected the royal father, that, to relieve his mind, he went on a pilgrimage to the island of Iona, and there died of grief.

As by the subjection of the southern moiety of Ireland to the jurisdiction of the king of Munster, the province of Leinster was made a dependency on that kingdom, and forced to pay to its sovereign the tribute of Eidirsgeol,—a mulct imposed from early times,—frequent efforts had been made by the states and princes of Leinster to rid themselves of so humbling a mark of submission. With this view they joined in a confederacy now formed against Brian by O'Felan, prince of the Desies, in which were associated also the prince of Ossory, and the Danes of Cork and Waterford. But the rapid movements of the watchful Brian, who suddenly attacking their united forces at a place called in our annals, the Circle of the Sons of Conrad,§ chased them from thence, with prodigious slaughter, into Waterford, completely disconcerted and broke up the whole confederacy. Proceeding directly after this achievement to Ossory, he forced the chiefs of that district to deliver up to him hostages, and made their hereditary prince, Mac-Gilla-Patrick, his prisoner. From thence sweeping over the plains of Leinster, and, according to the ordinary practice of Irish warfare, desolating them as he went, Brian succeeded for the time in reducing the refractory province to obedience. Hostages were given in pledge of future fidelity; and the two kings of Leinster, in person, tendered their allegiance and homage in the tent of the conqueror.

Placed as the monarch and his rival Brian were at this crisis, each flushed with recent victory, and meditating farther enterprises, there could hardly have existed a doubt in the mind of either that they must ere long be committed together in the field; and, as usually happens, it was from the younger and least tried of the two parties that the provocative to the onset first proceeded. In pursuance of the will of Olill-Ollum, already more than once adverted to, the district of Dalcas, or Dalcassia, the present county of Clare, was inherited by Brian, as prince of the Dalcassian tribe. A predatory incursion under the monarch into this territory, at the commencement of his reign, gave a sufficiently clear indication of hostile feeling; but a still more wounding offence to the pride of the gallant tribe to which Brian belonged, was, about the period we have now reached, wantonly committed. The sacred tree in the Plain of Adoration,

A. D. 782.

* Tigernach. ad an. 980. IV. Mag. ad an. 979 (ære com. 981.)
† Ibid., and Ware's *Antiquities* c. 24. ‡ Ibid.
§ "A bhfan mc Connradh."—An. Inisfall. ad an. 979. See also, for this battle, Vallancey.—*Laws of Tunistery, &c.*

at Adair*, under whose boughs the Dalcassian princes used in former times to be inaugurated, was, by Malachy's order, in the course of this inroad cut down.†

But these pointed aggressions, among which the latter stands forth the most prominently in all our annals, having failed to arouse the resentment of the hero of Munster, the monarch again, in the following year, held forth the signal of defiance, by marching his troops into the province of Leinster, which, as forming a part of the kingdom of Leath Mogh, was now under the dominion of Brian, and there spreading havoc and devastation over its plains "to the very sea."‡ Such an infringement of his royal rights was not to be submitted to by the king of Munster, who, putting himself at the head of a large force, marched directly against the monarch, and, by this prompt and decisive movement, rendered hostilities for the time unnecessary. Yielding to remonstrances so strongly backed, Malachy consented to acknowledge his rival's claims; and a sort of convention was then mutually agreed upon, confirming to Brian his right of dominion over the kingdom of Leath Mogh, in like manner as it assured to the monarch his right of sovereignty over Leath Cuinn. It was moreover stipulated on both sides, that all persons held in captivity by either, who belonged to the dominions of the other, should be forthwith delivered up; and lastly, in reference to the claim upon Leinster—the point immediately at issue,—it was settled that Donald, the king of that province, was bound to pay tribute to Brian.§ A. D. 983

Through the four or five following years this amicable arrangement appears to have been respected by both parties; but, in the year 988, whether in revenge for some aggression, or moved by the one sole aim and object of his career, the supplanting of the power of the monarchy, we find Brian actively preparing, both by land and water, for the invasion at once of the two provinces, Meath and Connaught. Embarking the whole of his force in boats on the Shannon, he thus conveyed them as far as Lough Ree, laying the country on each side under contribution. Then dividing his forces into two corps, he detached one of them to the western parts of Connaught, which they plundered and laid waste, slaying Murgisius, the Roydamna of that province; while with the other he himself marched into Meath, devastating all that lay in his course, on the western bank of the Shannon, and returned to his palace of Kinkora, laden with rich spoils.‖ A. D. 988.

The two great rivals were now again in open conflict; though, for the three following years, alternate inroads into each other's territories, for the purpose of spoil and plunder, appear to have been the only means of mutual annoyance resorted to by them. Against the Danes, however, the spirited monarch continued to carry on a brisk and effective warfare; and so closely laid siege to them in Dublin, for the space of "twenty nights," that they were at length reduced to salt water for their only drink. In this extremity, finding themselves compelled to submit, they agreed to pay to the monarch, in addition to the accustomed tributes, one ounce of gold out of every principal dwelling-house in Dublin, to be paid yearly on Christmas-night to him and his heirs for ever.¶ A. D. 989.

In the year 994, Dublin must again have been the scene of his triumphs, as he is said to have then carried off from thence two trophies,—the collar of Tomar, and the sword of Carlus;** to which, from the emphatic manner in which they are always mentioned,

* Annal. Inisfall. ad ann. 982. See an account of the practice of tree-worship among the ancient Irish, in c. ii. p. 43, &c. of this Work.

† Annal. Inisfall. ad an. 982—983. Our antiquary, Ledwich, in his great anxiety to prove the Irish to have been of Teutonic origin—a supposition which, with regard to a small portion of her population, the Scots, has been shown to be highly probable,—has adduced, among other evidence, the ancient custom of inaugurating the kings of Cashel on a large stone. "This was a Firbolgian custom," he says, "introduced from the north; where the people erected great stones, or stone-circles, for the election and inauguration of their princes." He forgot, however, that though the Eugenian branch of the Munster kings adopted this form on their election, those of the Dalcassian line were inaugurated under the Bile-Magh-Adair, or sacred tree, in Thomond; a custom which, being, according to him, a proof of Celtic descent, is sufficient to neutralize at least the inference deduced by him from the other.

‡ "*Go Muir.*"—Tigernach, ad an. 983. IV. Mag. ad an. 982, (ære com. 983.)

§ Inisfall. ad an. 983.

‖ IV. Mag. Vallancey (*Laws of Tanistry,*) from *Munster Records.* Vallancey gives to this Roydamna the name of Muiredach.

¶ Tigernach. ad an. 989.

** Harris could not have seen this record, or he would not have asserted that the sword of Carlus belonged to Carolus Knute, who was killed at Clontarf. The collar of Tomar was a golden torques, which the monarch Malachy took from the neck of a Danish chieftain whom he had conquered:—

"Let Erin remember the days of old,
Ere her faithless sons betrayed her,
When Malachy wore the collar of gold
Which he won from her proud invader."—*Irish Melodies.*

peculiar interest must have been attached. In the course of the same year, during an inroad made by him into Munster, an engagement ensued between his forces and those of Brian, in which the latter was defeated.* But this passing eclipse of the Momonian hero's good fortune was amply redeemed in the following year, when invading, in his turn, the dominions of the monarch, he gained a complete victory over him; and, carrying conflagration into the Royal Rath, in which stood the palace of the kings of T'ara,† burned that ancient and stately structure to the ground. At length, recalled perhaps by some worthier feelings than appear in general to have actuated their conduct, to a sense of the lasting injury they were inflicting upon their country by these feuds, the rival sovereigns again formed with each other a treaty of peace, on the basis, as before, of mutual recognition of their respective rights, as rulers of the two great divisions of the island, Leath Cuinn and Leath Mogh.‡

A. D. 997.

That an honest zeal for the public welfare bore some share in the motives that led to this step, may be fairly inferred from the first fruits of their reconcilement having been an active campaign in concert against the Danes. Marching with their united forces to Dublin, they there demanded and received hostages from the Northmen; and in the same year, having renewed their joint invasion of that city, they carried off from thence both spoil and hostages, and, as the chroniclers exultingly add, "with much triumph to the Irish."§ A yet more brilliant success awaited them in the following year, when, as they lay encamped with their respective armies in the valley called, in those times, Glen-Mama, the Danes poured forth from their seat of strength an immense force, with the hope of surprising and overwhelming the two sovereigns. But, in the conflict that then ensued, the superior fortune of the day was with the Irish; and, among the Danish princes and nobles who fell in the action, is recorded Harold, the son of Anlaf.‖

A. D. 1000.

Not long after this event the Northmen of Dublin, under the command of their king, Sitric, making an irruption into Leinster, carried away with them the king of that province, Donogh Mac-Donald; on hearing of which outrage upon his liegeman, the active Brian marched instantly with a select force to their city, and having delivered the royal captive, burned down their principal dun, or fortress, making himself master of the gold, silver, and other precious effects they had amassed, and then forced them to expel king Sitric, the author of the outrage, from the country. The Annals of the Four Masters represent Malachy as acting with Brian in this expedition; but Tigernach, the annals of Ulster, and of Inisfallen, all agree in attributing the credit of it to Brian alone.¶ It is, indeed, manifest that, about this period, the monarch had seen reason to separate his interests from those of the aspiring king of Munster; whether from jealousy of that prince's increasing fame, or, as seems more probable, from a clearer insight into the real nature of his designs, and a too late conviction, perhaps, that, in aiding so active a rival's schemes, he was but hastening forward the march of a power already threatening the rights and safety of the supreme throne itself.

Whatever may have been his real motives for such conduct, the fact of a change, at this time, in the policy of the monarch is sufficiently evinced by his marching his troops on a predatory expedition into Leinster (that province being now in relations of allegiance with Brian) in the very same year that had just been signalized by Brian's victory

* Inisfall. ad an. 994. With a spirit of partisanship which deserves praise, at least, for its ardour, being ready to kindle even on matters as far back as the tenth century, Vallancey suppresses all mention of this defeat of his favourite hero; though, in the annals most partial to the cause of Munster—those of Inisfallen—it forms almost the only record for the year.

† Annal. Innisfall. ad an. 995. These annals style the structure that was burned down "Teach n aoidhe," or, the House of the Learned Man, or Preceptor; but, according to Vallancey's authorities, it was the Regal House, or Rath, of Meath.

‡ Inisfall. ad an. 997.

§ IV. Mag. ad an. 997. "Fri suabhais Gaoidhelaibh."

‖ IV. Mag. ad an. 999.

¶ Tigernach and Inisfall. ad an. 999. We have here another historical partisan in the field. The author of Cambrensis Eversus, with whom Malachy is not undeservedly a favourite, assigns to him alone all the glory of this achievement. "He attributes (says Vallancey) the whole honour of this action to Malachy, with an utter exclusion of Brian, although the annals of Tigernach expressly mention Brian as solely engaged in the affair, without attributing any share of it to Malachy." Vallancey then proceeds, with much warmth and energy, to contend that Malachy had no share whatever in this exploit.

As long as this sort of partisanship confines itself within the bounds of honest zeal, it is, however, misplaced, respectable; but too often unfairness is one of the weapons to which it resorts, and Vallancey himself is not always exempt from this charge. In order to palliate the violence of Brian's proceedings, attempts have been made by some of his enthusiastic admirers to make it appear that the first aggression came from Malachy; and, with this view, Vallancey, in giving an account of an attack upon Munster, in the year 968, by the people of Connaught, asserts, without the slightest authority from any of our authentic annals, that the monarch's own principality of Meath took a part in the aggression. "In 968," he says, "the people of Connaught, assisted by those of Meath, in open violation of their king's treaty with Brian, invaded the west of Munster. . . . . Brian, to revenge this insult, marched at the head of a powerful army," &c.

over the Northmen. In consequence, as it is said, of this overt act of hostility, but clearly in pursuance of his own long-meditated scheme of usurpation, Brian collected together a large army from the provinces of Connaught, Munster, and Leinster, together with an auxiliary corps furnished by the Danes of Dublin, whom he had now brought into obedience; and, at the head of this imposing force, marched towards Tara. Learning that the monarch had retired with his troops to the plain of Bregia, he detached to that place a squadron of Danish cavalry, which, coming in conflict with the troops of Malachy, were, almost to a man, cut to pieces. On the appearance however, of Brian, with the main body of his immense force, the monarch saw that to continue his resistance would be for the present unavailing, and that by concession only could he hope to purchase a brief respite for the monarchy. Accordingly, appealing to his rival's generosity, on account of the disparity in the numbers of their respective forces, and giving hostages in pledge of fidelity and present submission, he succeeded for the time in averting the danger with which he was threatened; and Brian, withdrawing his troops peaceably from the royal territory, departed, as the chroniclers express it, "without battle, without waste, without burning."* A. D. 1000.

According to some accounts† of this transaction, the monarch, in pleading the comparative weakness of his own force, requested that a certain time should be allowed him for the purpose of bringing into the field his whole military strength; engaging solemnly that if, within that period, he should find himself unable to try the question with the sword, he would at once resign his throne and pay homage and tribute to Brian as monarch. With this plausible arrangement the king of Munster, it is added, politely complied. That such instances of courtesy in warfare were not unfrequent among the Scandinavians, we learn from one of their own historians; who tells of a Danish general voluntarily reducing his force in order to be on a level with that of his antagonist.‡ But the story of Brian's still more chivalrous flight of complaisance, besides that it is mentioned in none of the authentic Irish chronicles, bears evident marks of modern fabrication.

CHAPTER XXI.

Usurpation of the Throne of Tara by Brian.—His triumphant Progress through the Country.—Gifts and privileges bestowed by him upon the Church.—State of the Country under his dominion.—Unusually long interval of Peace.—Disturbed by the restlessness and perfidy of the People of Leinster.—Malachy, Defeated by them, applies for assistance to Brian.—Is refused.—Preparations of the Northmen, in league with the Lagenians, for a Descent upon Ireland.—Forces collected from most of the Danish dominions.—Great battle of Clontarf and its consequences.

The following year beheld the accomplishment of the ambitious Brian's projects and hopes. It is commonly stated, with a view of exonerating him from the odium of usurpation, and investing his acts with the sanction of popular approval, that he had been, previously to his first rebellion, solicited earnestly by the princes and states of Connaught to depose Malachy from the supreme throne, and take the sceptre into his own hands. But in none of our really trustworthy records is there to be found the slightest authority for this assertion; and the term "rebellion," applied by the annalists to Brian's first march upon Tara,§ sufficiently points out the sort of aspect under which that agression must have been generally regarded. Though left to linger on through a few more feverish months, in the mere semblance of sovereignty, the fate of the monarch was by that step finally sealed, and his rival's supremacy secured. In the following year, at the head of a force as formidable in numbers as before, Brian again marched to Tara; and there, in the palace of her ancient monarchs, received the homage A. D. 1001.

* "Gan cath, gan indradh, gan losce."—IV. Mag. ad an. 1000 (ære com. 1001.)

† O'Halloran. ‡ Mallet, tom. i. 231.

§ Tigernach. ad. an. 1000, and IV Mag. ad an. 999 (ære com 1000) Tigernach calls it "a rebellion through treachery;"—*impod tre meabhal.*

of their last legitimate successor, the descendant of a series of fifty Hy-Niell kings, and was by him acknowledged supreme sovereign of all Ireland.

However strong and ascendant was the power acquired by Brian over the minds of his fellow countrymen, by a long life of military success, so daring a step as he had now ventured upon, in utter defiance of all those long cherished prejudices in favour of old and prescriptive rights which we have seen to be innate in the national character, could hardly have been risked by him without some misgivings, and even apprehensions, as to the result. Accordingly, though in no quarter does there appear to have been open resistance to his authority, nor any instance of a recourse to arms, in favour of Malachy, it is yet clear, from the constant and watchful activity with which the new monarch kept the field through the two or three following years, and his restless movements throughout all Ireland, demanding hostages in every quarter, that the apparently willing submission of the country was mainly the work of his own vigilance and vigour; and that what he had acquired by the sword, was chiefly by the sword maintained.

The powerful houses of the Hy-Niells, as well the two branches long excluded from the succession as those—the Tirone and Clan-Colman,—which had, down to this period, alternately enjoyed it,* made common cause in opposing and thwarting the new monarch, but only in one instance appear to have ventured on open hostilities with him in the field.

A. D. 1008. The southern Hy-Niells having, with the aid of the forces of Connaught, taken up arms against his authority, he gave them battle in the neighbourhood of Athlone, and obtained an easy victory over them.†

The prince who governed at this time the Hy-Niells of the north was Aodh, the grandson of the heroic Murkertach,—a chief who, as being the roydamna, or successor apparent to Malachy, was the person, next to this prince, the most aggrieved by his deposition. But a menacing movement or two, not followed up by any actual hostility, was all that the usurper had to encounter from the young Aodh; who, making war soon after (A. D. 1005,) on the province of Ulad, fell gallantly, as became a descendant of the Chief "of the Warriors of the Saffron Hue," in an engagement called, from the place where it occurred, the Battle of the Wood of Tulka.‡ Among the few faint attempts at resistance made by the Hy-Niells of the north, was that of a prince of Ulidia, Flahertach O'Neill, who refused to give hostages to Brian. But the military dictator extorted these sureties by force;§ and, soon after, carried off Flahertach himself as his prisoner.

The ready acquiescence with which, in general, so violent a change in the polity of the country was submitted to, may be in a great degree attributed to the example of patience and disinterestedness exhibited by the immediate victim of this revolution, the deposed Malachy himself. Nor, in forming our estimate of this prince's character from a general view of his whole career, can we well hesitate in coming to the conclusion, that not to any backwardness in the field, or want of vigour in council, is his tranquil submission to the violent encroachments of his rival to be attributed; but to a regard, rare at such an unripe period of civilization, for the real interests of the public weal, and an unwillingness to risk, for his own personal views, the explosive burst of discord which, in so inflammable a state of the political atmosphere, a struggle for the monarchy would, he knew, infallibly provoke. Acting on this prudent, and, as far as we can judge, patriotic motive, he even generously lent his aid to the usurper in preserving the general peace of the country; and when Brian, attended by the kings of Leath-Mogh, proceeded on his circuit through the provinces,—passing, as his progress is described, "beyond the Red Cataract,‖ into Ula,"—we find Malachy, with the contingent of troops supplied by his principality, following quietly among the other liegemen in the royal train.

During one of these progresses, having remained a week in the city of Armagh, the new monarch left, as a devout offering, on the great altar of the cathedral, a gold collar weighing twenty ounces.¶ A most marked feature, indeed, in the policy of this prince, was the regard manifested by him for the interests of religion, and his liberal patronage of the ministers of the church. In the course of a subsequent visit to Ulster he afforded a substantial mark of his feeling on this subject, when, in order to repair the ravages committed by the Northmen, he granted, in addition to a gift of glebe lands to the churches of Ireland, a considerable extension of their immunities and rights. After depositing his pious oblation at Armagh, he proceeded, attended by the kings of the south,

* See *Dissertation &c.*, by O'Connor of Balenagar, sect. 15.
† IV. Mag ad an. 1001 (æræ com. 1003.)
‡ "Cath Craoibhe Tulcha." IV. Mag.
§ Annal Inisfall. ad an. 1006.
‖ *Eas ruaidh*, the present Ballyshannon,—called the Red Cataract, from the salmon-leap, for which this spot is celebrated.
¶ The value of gold was, I suppose, at that time, about five times as great as at the present day.

to the royal seat of the Dalriedans in Antrim, called Rath-mor-Muige-Line, or the Great Fortress near the Water,* where he received hostages from all the princes of that region, as well as from the whole of the remaining dynasts of Leth-Cuinn.

To follow in detail the various progresses of this description which he performed during the first few years of his reign, would be little more than a mere repetition of the same uninteresting and, for the most part, bloodless course of events; the few instances that occurred of resistance to his demands, having led rarely to any more serious result than the seizure of the refractory chieftains as prisoners; and all such captives of this rank as fell into his power were led in chains to his regal fortress at Kinkora.

This vigorous policy appears to have completely succeeded. An interval of peace for some years followed upon these measures, such as it has rarely been Ireland's fortune, whether in ancient or modern times, to enjoy; and the void left by the dearth of the usual stirring events in the bloodless annals of these few tranquil years has been filled up, by the fancy of later writers, with a glowing picture of the peace, prosperity, and civilization which was now diffused throughout the whole country, by the salutary laws and wise government of its ruler. In addition to the endowments and privileges newly conferred upon the church, the schools and colleges ravaged by the Danes were all restored to their former condition and new institutions of learning and piety founded. The wealth of the state devoted to objects of public utility was, we are told, employed in the erection of fortified places, in the building of numerous bridges, and the construction of massive causeways; while, to provide also for the dignity of the regal state, the various royal houses and palaces throughout Munster, more especially the monarch's favourite abode at Kinkora, were, by his orders, all rebuilt and embellished. It is added likewise by the same romantic authorities, as a proof of the influence of Brian's laws on society, and the consequent purity of the public morals, that a beautiful maiden, adorned with gold and jewels, and bearing in her hand a white wand, with a costly ring on its top, travelled alone over the whole island without any attempt being made on her honour or her treasures.†

Through the whole of this prosperous picture it is easy to trace the florid colouring of the fabulist; and, with the exception of the endowment granted to the churches, and the repairs of some of the royal forts in Munster, there is not one of the acts attributed thus to Brian, of which any record is to be found in our genuine annals; while the story of the maiden, travelling safely with her ring and jewels over the island, is but an improvement on similar fables long current among the Danes and Anglo-Saxons. It was the boast of the Danish lawgiver, Frotho, that he could expose, without fear of theft, the most precious things on the public paths; and, in Alfred's time, as a similar test of the honesty of the people, rich bracelets were, it is said, hung up by the road-side.‡

But though, in the instance of our Irish hero,—and the same has been the fate of all such lights of obscure periods,—romance supplies the place amply of authentic history, there is yet enough, in the genuine records of his actions, to entitle him to the rank he holds in historic fame. Had he no other claim to distinction, his name would fully merit commemoration for the vigorous policy with which, when advanced to the supreme power, he succeeded in quelling and keeping down that whole swarm of petty kings and dynasts, who, at once tyrants and rebels, have been at all times the worst scourge of the country, leaving neither peace to the people, nor security to the throne. To his prompt vigour in suppressing, or rather coercing into harmlessness this most mischievous as well as most absurd of all forms of aristocracy, is to be attributed the rare and, in those times, unexampled tranquillity which the country enjoyed under his sway.

* Inisfall. ad an. 1004. See Beauford (*Ancient Topography of Ireland,*) at Rath-mor-muighe-line:—Collectan. vol. iii.

† Verses quoted by Keating. We find in Feller (*Dict. Hist.*) a translation of these verses by M. Lally Tolendal:—"Les lois et les mœurs étaient tellement respectés, que les bardes Irlandois, en chantant le règne heureux de Brien Boroihmh, ont dit,—

"Une vierge, unissant aux dons de la nature
De l'or et de rubis l'éclat et la valeur,
A la clarté du jour ou dans la nuit obscure
D'une mer jusqu' à l'autre allait sans protecteur,
Ne perdait rien de sa parure,
Ne risquait rien pour sa pudeur."

‡ "Il fit de si bons réglemens contre le brigandage, et veilla si à leur observation qu'il exposoit des bagues d'or sur les grands chemins sans que personne osat les prendre. Les historiens Anglais racontent la même chose du grand Alfred."—Mallet, *Hist. de Dannemarc.*

Of William the Conqueror's time, a similar romantic account is given. "Amongst other things, is not to be forgotten that good peace that he made in this land; so that a man of any account might go over his kingdom unhurt, with his bosom full of gold."—*Saxon Chronicle.*

A storm, however, was now gathering, which boded interruption to this short interval of peace. The high hand with which Brian had carried his usurpation, setting at defiance all competitors and opponents, had the effect of awing also into submission the Danish princes of the island; and although, in the seaport towns, the Northmen were still numerous, being encouraged by a policy, dangerous under such circumstances, to continue their commerce with the natives, not an attempt appears to have been made by them to disturb the general peace. In the year 1013, however, the people of Leinster, who had been always the most shamefully forward among their countrymen, both in serving as auxiliaries to the foreigner, and in using his alliance for their own purposes, joined their forces to those of Sitric, King of Dublin, and, with more than ordinary ferocity, invaded the province of Meath.* The King of Leinster, Maolmorda, had, in the year 999, been aided by the forces of the Danes in usurping the crown of that kingdom, and now co-operated with them in this plundering expedition into Meath, despoiling and burning all that lay in their way, as far as "the Sacred Ground of St. Fechin, and the Plain of Bregia."†

A. D. 1013.

To avenge this violation of his territory, the deposed monarch, now only King of Meath, set fire to the neighbouring districts of Leinster as far as Benadar,‡ the present Hill of Howth. There, being attacked by the combined force of Maolmorda and his Danish allies, he was entirely defeated with the loss of 200 of his best troops, his son, Flann, and several of the noble chiefs of Meath. Under the pressure of this defeat, and threatened with still farther aggression, Malachy adopted the resolution of applying for assistance to Brian; and accordingly hastening to the palace of Kinkora, where the monarch's court was now held, he there presented himself as an humble suitor in the presence of that prince whom he had, but a few years before, looked down upon from the supreme throne. Representing in pathetic terms the constant alarm to which he was exposed by the joint hostility of two such formidable neighbours, he implored earnestly the aid and interference of Brian to avert from his territory so dreadful a scourge. To this entreaty the veteran hero, wholly untouched, as it would seem, by the appeals to his generosity, which the peculiar circumstances of the case involved, returned a stern refusal; and the King of Meath was left to defend his possessions by such means as his own narrow resources supplied.§

In the summer, however, of that year, so menacing an aspect had the combined movements of the Danes and Lagenians begun to assume, that Brian, to meet the coming danger, advanced his quarters to the neighbourhood of Dublin, laying waste the country of Ossory in his march. At the same time he detached into Leinster his son, Morrough, with a select body of troops which, in like manner, devastated the country with fire and sword as far as Glendalough, and the Sacred Ground of St. Caimin; and then returned, with a number of prisoners and abundant spoil, to Brian, whose camp was pitched on that ground, in the neighbourhood of Dublin, now called Kilmainham. Here he remained from the month of August until Christmas; when, finding that he could not succeed in bringing the Danes or Lagenians to action, he broke up his quarters and returned, laden with ample spoil, to Kinkora.

Mean while the Northmen, encouraged by his absence from Munster, had made a descent with a large fleet on the south of Ireland, and plundered and burned the city of Cork; but, before they could re-embark, were attacked with success by the natives, and lost in the action that ensued, among other distinguished leaders, the young Anlaf, son of Sitric, the King of Dublin.

No sooner had Brian withdrawn from his cantonments in the neighbourhood of Dublin, than the Danes of that city, as well as of every other part of Ireland where these foreigners were dispersed, began to prepare with the utmost activity for a combined effort against the Irish, by despatching envoys in every direction to summon auxiliaries to their banner. Not only from Scotland, from the Orkneys and Hebrides, the Isle of Man, and the Isles of Shetland, did they muster together all the disposable force of their fellow Northmen, but even to Denmark, Norway, and other parts of Scandinavia,‖ messengers were sent to solicit immediate succours; and such were the accounts circulated by them of their prospects of success, that, as a French chronicler of that age states, a large fleet full of northern adventurers were induced by these representations to crowd to the Irish shores, bringing with them their wives and children, and hoping to share, as he

* Inisfall. ad an. 1013. IV. Mag. ad an. 1012 (erre com. 1013.)

† Gur airg Tarmon Feithin 7 Maigh Breagh.—Inisfall. *ib.* Fechin was a saint of the seventh century to whom, in many parts of Ireland, this sort of Termon, or free lands, were dedicated.

‡ *i. e.* The Mountain of Birds.

§ Inisfall. ad an. 1013.

‖ Inisfall. ad ann. 1014.

adds, in the conquest and enjoyment of a country "which contained twelve cities, most ample bishoprics, and abundant wealth."*

Though long prepared, by the unnatural alliance which had placed Leinster in the hands of the Danes, to expect a struggle of no ordinary description, Brian could little have foreseen so formidable an array of force as was now collecting to assail him. Nothing daunted, however, by their numbers, he put himself at the head of his own brave army of Munster; and, joined by Malachy with the troops of Meath, and by the forces of Connaught under the command of Teige, the king of that province, marched directly to the Plain of Dublin, and took up his station in front of the enemy on the very same ground which had been occupied by him in the summer of the preceding year. Having reconnoitred the state of the opposing force, he ventured to detach into Leinster a select body of troops, consisting of the choice of his Dalcassian warriors, together with a small body also of Eugenians, for the purpose of devastating the dominions of the King of Leinster, and thereby causing a diversion of the enemy's force. The command of this secret expedition the monarch intrusted to his son, Donough, with orders to despatch his mission quickly, and return to the army within two days, before which period it was not expected a general engagement would take place.

Some traitor, however, in the camp of Brian, had contrived to apprize the Danes of the departure of this detachment; urging earnestly, at the same time, the policy of commencing their attack before this gallant band should have returned. It is stated in the Annals of Inisfallen, but in that alone of all our native chronicles, that the traitor who conveyed this intelligence and advice to the enemy was no other than the deposed monarch, Malachy, who also promised, it is added, to draw off his own troops in the approaching engagement, and remain with his 1000 men of Meath inactive. Had this wronged and despoiled monarch, so lately a suitor in vain to the usurper of his crown for the means of defending the small remains of ancient dignity still left to him, been so far tempted by the present occasion of revenge as to forget at once all his sense of duty and patriotism, and close a long life of public virtue in disgrace, such a fall, hurried on as it had been by wrongs and insults, would have excited far more of painful regret than of surprise. It is no small relief, however, to discover that there exist no valid grounds for this story; that, as presently shall be shown, it is wholly at variance with subsequent established facts, and owed its origin solely to a wretched spirit of provincial partisanship which, in order to exalt by comparison the character of the popular hero, Brian, did not hesitate to blacken unjustly the fame of his competitor, Malachy.

The intimation, by whomsoever conveyed, of the diminution of Brian's force by the late detachment, appears to have been acted upon by the enemy; who, having spent the whole of the night in preparing for a general action, presented themselves at the first dawn of light before the Irish army, which had taken up its position at this time on the plain of Clontarf. It had been the wish, we are told, of Brian to avoid A. D. 1014. engaging on this day (Friday, April 23d,) which, as being the anniversary of Christ's Passion, ought to have been kept sacred, as he felt, from the profanation of warfare. Being forced, however, to waive his scruples upon this point, he afterwards skilfully, as we shall see, turned the incident to account; making it the means of calling forth the religious as well as the military zeal and enthusiasm of countrymen.

While, according to Irish tradition, the motive of the Danes for provoking the conflict on this day was, the wish to avail themselves of the diminished state of Brian's force, the Scandinavian authorities, on the other hand, attribute it to supernatural suggestion; and tell of some oracular idol which, on being consulted by the Danish general, Bruadair, answered, that if the engagement took place on a Friday, King Brian would assuredly fall in the field.†

The confederate army of the Danes and Lagedians was composed of three separate corps, or divisions; the first of which consisted of the Danes of Dublin, led by two distinguished officers, Dolat and Conmaol, together with a select body of 1000 Northmen, clad in coats of mail from head to foot, and commanded by two Norwegian princes, Anrud and Charles, the sons of White Danes. The second division, formed of the forces of Leinster, was commanded by Maolmurda, principal king of that province; and, sub-

* "His temporibus Normanni supradicti quod patres eorum nunquam perpetrasse ausi sunt, cum innumera classe Hiberniam insulam, quæ *Irlanda* dicitur, ingressi sunt, una cum uxoribus, et liberis et captivis Christianis, quos fecerant sibi servos, ut Hirlandis extinctis, ipsi pro ipsis inhabitarent opulentissimam terram, quæ XII civitates, cum amplissimis episcopatibus et unum regem habet, ac propriam linguam, sed Latinas literas."—Ademar ap. Labbe.

† Niala Saga, ap. Johnstone, *Antiq. Celto-Scand.* Thus, in the Latin version:—"Hoc per veneficia explorante quemadmodum abitura esset pugna, responsum oraculi sic tulerat: si die Veneris pugna foret Brianem regem adepta victoria casurum; sin prius confligeretur, omnes qui hunc adversum consisterent, occasuros esse, hinc Broder ante diem Veneris acie dimicandum negavit."

ordinately to him, by some minor dynasts, among whom were the Prince of Hy-Falgia, and Tuathal, of the Liffey territory. With these were joined also a large body, or battalion of Danes.* The third corps consisted of the auxiliaries from the coasts of the Baltic, and from the isles, under the orders of Bruadair, the admiral of the fleet which had brought them to Ireland, and of Lodar, earl of the Orkney islands. Attached to this division, there were also a number of Britons from Cornwall and Wales, under the petty princes of their respective territories.†

To confront this array of the enemy's forces, the army of Brian was likewise divided into three separate columns; at the head of one of which he placed his eldest son, Morrough, intending to oppose it to the first division of the enemy. This column was composed of the troops of the King of Meath, of the brave Dalgais, now diminished in numbers, but strong in valour and fame, and a body of men from Connacnemara, a maritime district of Western Connaught. Of the loyal devotion of the blood of Brian to the national cause, there was no want of pledges on that day; as, in addition to the intrepid Morrough, there fought also in the ranks of this column four other sons of the monarch named Teige, Donald, Conor, and Flan, besides the grandson of Brian, young Turlough, the son of the commander, Morrough.

The division whose task it was to oppose the second of the enemy's corps, was commanded by Cian and Donald, both princes of the Eugenian line, and of whom the former is said, by the annalists, to have exceeded in stature and beauty all other Irishmen. Under these chiefs were ranged, in addition to the warriors of their own gallant tribe, the forces of the King of the Desies, and of all the other various septs and principalities of the south of Ireland. Among the dynasts named as assisting with their troops in this division are found Scanlan, Prince of Loch Lene, and O'Dubhlon, King of the O'Connals of Gabhra. Nor did the jealousy so long subsisting between the two moieties of the island prevent the northern portion from contributing its share of aid on this great occasion; as, in the list of the chiefs commanding the second column, we find O'Carroll, Prince of Orgiall, in Ulster, and Maguire, Prince of Fermanagh,—the two most illustrious Irishmen, says the chronicler, that graced the field on that day;‡ and therefore worthy, he adds, of fighting under the banner of Cian.

To the third division of Brian's army, which was under the command of O'Conor, son of the King of Connaught, was assigned the task of engaging the auxiliaries brought by the enemy's ships from Norway and the isles; and, in forming this corps, a number of Ultonian kings and chiefs combined their forces. Among these are found enumerated O'Hedian of Adnia, O'Kelly of Hy-Mania, Aodh "the Wounder," King of Ely, and Echtigern, Prince of Aradia.§

From the above enumeration of the forces of the Irish on this occasion, it will be seen that the emergency of the crisis, threatening danger not only to their liberties, but to their very existence as a nation, had aroused in them a spirit of unanimity, as rare then, as it has continued unluckily, ever since, though leaving noble evidence of the energies that a country like Ireland is capable of in a cause that rallies around it cordially the arms and hearts of all her sons.

Having thus arranged his order of battle, the veteran monarch went himself among the troops, accompanied only by his son Morrough; and, addressing them all, from the highest to the lowest, conjured them to summon up their utmost strength and fortitude against the base confederacy of pirates now before them. Fearing lest their confidence in their own good fortune might be diminished, by missing from among them so many of those brave Dalcassians who stood, in all emergencies, the brunt of the conflict, he explained to them the importance of the service on which that active corps had been detached, and the salutary effects it would produce in weakening and diverting the ene-

* Inisfall. ad an. 1014. "Cath do Ghallaib;" the word cath signifying both a battle and a battalion.

† "Cbein mc Maolmuadh oe e b. faide b. dheas an Eirinn."—*Inisfall. ad an.* 1014. Cian was the chief of the Eugenians of Cashell, and son-in-law of Brian. There remain some lamentations or elegies on this warrior's death, written by Mac Giolla Caoimh, a poet who flourished, we are told, in the time of Brian. Of these elegies which are found in the collection called the Munster Book, Mr. O'Reilly gives the following account:—"1st. A poem of forty four verses, beginning, 'Dreadful the night, this night.' It is the lamentation of the poet after Cian, Brian, and his son, Morrough. 2d. A poem of 108 verses, beginning, 'Raithlean's Rath of Core and Cian,' upon the deserted state of Rath Raithlean, and other palaces, after the death of Core, Cian, and other Momonian princes."—*Trans. Iberno-Celt. Society.*

‡ "Ar na radh don dis sin, o b. hiad b. sia badh thuaidh an Eirin san sluaigh sin."

§ This account of the disposition of the respective forces is taken chiefly from the Annals of Inisfallen. According to these and other native records, it does not appear, that there were any Danes in Brian's army; but that it was a purely national force. It would seem from Torfæus, however, that there were some Northmen on the side of Brian, as he mentions that Bruadair and Upsac, another of the pirate chiefs, fought on opposite sides:—"Evidens examplicans præsentis scripti cap. 10., exhibit, Broderum et Upsacum, piratas, Bello Brianico diversas partes secutos."—*Rer. Orcad. Hist. Pref.*

my's force. Then, reverting to the crimes and enormities of the Danes throughout the long period of their tyranny over Ireland, he reminded them how constantly and cruelly these swarms of foreign barbarians had employed themselves in murdering the native kings and chieftains, in spreading conflagration through all their castles and holy houses, laying prostrate the churches of God, and plundering and violating the rich shrines of the saints. "The blessed Trinity," he then exclaimed, in a loud and solemn voice, "hath at length looked down upon our sufferings, and endued you with the power and the courage, this day, to extirpate for ever the tyranny of the Danes over Ireland; thus punishing them for their innumerable crimes and sacrileges by the avenging power of the sword." On saying these words, he exhibited in his left hand a bloody crucifix, while in his right he waved triumphantly his sword; and then exclaiming, "Was it not on this day that Christ himself suffered death for you?" gave the signal for action.*

Of the details of the memorable battle which then ensued, and which lasted, without pause or breathing time, from a little after sunrise till the dusk of the evening, there is but little told in our authentic annals; while the accounts derived from other sources, as well Scandinavian as Irish, come through channels which render them liable to suspicion, or at least suggest the necessity of caution in the use of them. According to some writers, the veteran monarch, notwithstanding his advanced period of life, being then in his eighty-eighth year, commanded in person throughout the battle. But the most probable and consistent accounts represent him as yielding so far to his infirmities as to retire early in the course of the action to a tent or pavilion in the immediate neighbourhood of the scene of conflict, where he could be consulted in every emergency, and preside in spirit, if not in person, over the field.

In the mean while his son Morrough, who had himself reached his great climacteric, directed actively the operations of the whole army; and, being followed into the thick of the fight by his son, Turlough, a youth but fifteen years old, performed such prodigies of valour and prowess throughout the day, as to concentrate almost solely upon himself the attention of most of the historians of battle.† Among the chiefs slain by him in personal combat during the action, was the gallant Sitric,‡ son of the earl of the Orkneys, whom he is said to have despatched by a single blow of his battle-axe, cutting the body of the Dane in two through his armour.

The prowess of the 1000 men in mail, commanded by the two Norwegian brothers, had, at the beginning of the action, struck panic into the troops opposed to them; but the bravery of Morrough and his gallant Dalgais soon broke through the spell that surrounded these mailed warriors, and not a man of the thousand escaped to tell the fortunes of that day. Nor did the hero himself who performed these deeds long survive his brave victims. Having put to the sword this chosen band of Northmen, and cut down with his own hand one of the chiefs who commanded them, Murrough had hurried away to another quarter of the field, and was there pursuing the same victorious career, when Anrud, the brother of the Norwegian prince he had just slain, singled him out for deadly conflict and revenge. On seeing him approach, the Irish hero rushed forward to meet him, and seizing him firmly with his left hand,—the right having been enfeebled by constant use of his sword,—shook him fairly out of his coat of mail to the earth, and there transfixed him with his sword. The Norwegian, however, in dying, had his full revenge; for, as the conqueror stooped down over him, he drew forth the knife or dagger which hung by Morrough's side, and plunged it into his breast.

This fatal wound, though not followed by death for some hours, having robbed the Irish of their gallant leader, the active command devolved upon Malachy, the King of Tara; under whom, the ultimate success of the day was accomplished§, and the Danes and their traitorous confederates driven with immense slaughter from the field.‖

* Inisfall. ad an. 1014. † Ibid.

‡ Sitric is mentioned in the *Niala Saga* as commanding one of the wings of the Danish army.

§ IV. Mag. ad ann. 1013 (er. com. 1014.) With the usual party view of depressing their hero's rival, this fact, so important to the memory of Malachy, as entirely absolving him from the odious charge of having been false to the cause of his country on this day, is wholly suppressed by the Munster annalists; and Vallancey, without the same excuse for his partisanship, has been guilty of the same unfair omission. It is, indeed, strange that even such writers as Sir James Ware (chap. 24, ad ann. 1014) and Dr. Lanigan (chap. 23, § xi.) should have fallen into the general error respecting Malachy's conduct, and taken the same unjust and, in every sense of the word, false view of his public character and career.

‖ The details of the battle given above, are all from the Annals of Inisfallen; but the particulars that follow, respecting the death of Brian, are found in the *Niala Saga*, or Norse account of the battle. The following is Johnstone's version of a part of what I have extracted:—"Tum Broder sic exclamare; referat homo homini Brianem a Brodere dejectum. Mox ad eos, qui in tergis fugientium herebant, decurritur, iisque occasus regis nuntiatur, reversi oppido Ulfus Hræda et Kerthialfadus Broderem ac suos corona circumdant ingesta in eos undique materia, sic Broder vivus capitur."—*Antiquitat. Scando-Celt.* The agreement on several important points between the Scandinavian and the Irish accounts of the battle,—the share taken by Sitric, or Sigtrygg, in the expedition,—the rank of Bruadair, as commander of the pirate fleet, and the great event of

It was in the midst of the rout and carnage of their retreat that the Danish admiral, Bruadair, having fled with a few followers for refuge to a small wood in the neighbourhood of Brian's tent, perceived from his lurking place that the monarch was surrounded with but few attendants,—most of his body-guards having joined in pursuit of the enemy,—and was kneeling with hands upraised, and his mind intent on prayer.* Taking advantage of the moment, Bruadair rushed into the tent with his followers, and, after a short struggle, put the aged monarch, and a boy who was in attendance upon him, to death. Then, unable to restrain his triumph, he held up the blade, still warm from the royal veteran's heart, and cried out, "Let it be proclaimed, from man to man, that Brian has fallen by the hand of Bruadair." The ill-omened tidings spread more rapidly than he could have desired, and soon reached the ears of the absent body-guard; who, hurrying back to the royal tent, were only consoled for the sad spectacle there presented to them, by their success in seizing the murderer alive, and making him expiate, by a death of lingering torment, the ruthless act of which he had been guilty.

The numbers of the slain in this battle have been variously stated; some computing the loss of the Danes, between killed and drowned, to have been no less than 13,000 or 14,000 men, and that of the Legenians 3000; while the number killed on the Irish side is, in the same accounts, calculated at not more than 7000. The estimate most likely, however, to be near the truth, is that in the Annals of Inisfallen, which represents the loss of the Danish and Leinster forces combined, to have been about 6012. On the amount of slaughter, however, in the ranks of the national army, our annals are silent.† It appears pretty certain that the loss of life, in the battles of those days, was considerably less than in the warfare of modern times. An Italian historian, in describing a battle so late as the fifteenth century, which he describes as the greatest that had then taken place for fifty years, mentions, as a proof of the determined valour with which it was contested, that the number of killed on both sides amounted to more than a thousand men;‡ and it is apparent, from the accounts given by our native chroniclers themselves, that the battles of the Irish, in the times whose history we have been recording, were, however frequent, by no means attended with any greater proportion of loss of life.

Judging from the number, however, of princes and chieftains who fell on both sides at Clontarf, the amount of the general slaughter may well be supposed to have been immense; as, besides Brian himself, his son, Morrough, and the son of the latter, young Turlough, we find a long list enumerated by the annalists, of princes and heads of tribes who died fighting, as it appears, in the ranks confusedly with the other combatants. On the adverse side, the havoc made of the principal chieftains is represented as still more considerable. Among the native princes who fell were the king of Leinster, the prime cause of all the strife, together with his roydamna, or successor, and the king of Hy-Falgia; while, of the many Danish princes and earls whom the fleet of Bruadair had wafted to the Irish coast, the greater number found their graves upon the shore of Clontarf. But this immense proportion of loss among the commanders, as compared with that of the rank and file, is to be attributed mainly to the chivalrous practice of single combat between the chiefs, which prevailed in the warfare of those days, as in the heroic ages of Greece and Rome.

On the day after the battle all the wounded of the Irish army were conveyed by Teige, the son of Brian, and the Eugenian prince, Cian, to the camp at Kilmainham; and on the following day, the monks of St. Columba, at Swords, hearing of the death of the monarch, came to bear away his body for the purpose of having it interred in the cathedral of Armagh. From Swords it was conveyed to the monastery of St. Ciaran, at Duleek, and from thence to Louth, where the archbishop of Armagh, Maelmury,§ awaited the

Brian falling, in the moment of victory, by his hand,—these striking points of agreement between the two narratives, are thus noticed by Torfæus: "Mirus utrobique consensus apparebit, nam Sitricus illic, nobis Sigtryggus, idem quod victoriosus, et qui Broder nobis, Bruodarus illis, et classis Danicæ præfectus, hic Piratarum antesignanus, utrisque Briani interfector: victoriam vero penes Brianum uterque statuit, eumque ex vulnere mortuum."

* Marianus Scotus, in his short record of the battle, represents Brian as engaged in prayer at the moment of the attack:—"Brianus, rex Hiberniæ, Paraseeve Paschæ, sexta feria 9 Calendas Maii, munibus et mente ad Deum intentus necatur;"—all which Torfæus pronounces to be in perfect accordance with the Scandinavian accounts:—'Quo nihil nostrorum traditionibus, si annum excipeis, convenientius dici vel scribi poterat; nam et genus mortis festumque idem nobiscum expressit."—*Rer. Orcad.* c. 10.

† Vallancey says, "According to the account inserted in the Inisfallen Annals, there were 4000 of Brian's forces killed during the engagement, and many wounded;"—but I can find no such statement in either of the series of the Inisfallen Annals, edited by Dr. O'Connor

‡ Machiavel.—"E fu questa giornata combattuta con più virtù che alcun altra che fosse stata fatta in cinquanta anni in Italia; perchè vi mori trà l' una parte e l' altra più che mille uomini."—*Delle Istorie*, l. 8.

§ Maelmury, i. e. *servant of Mary*. This prelate is mentioned with high praise by the Four Masters (ap. *Colgan.*) who style him, "The head of the clergy of Western Europe, the chief of the holy orders of the West, and a most wise doctor."

royal remains, and had them borne, with religious solemnity, to the archiepiscopal city. The bodies of Morrough and two other chieftains of the family were carried thither at the same time, and the remains of Brian deposited at the north side of the cathedral, those of Morrough and his heroic kinsmen at the south. During twelve successive nights the religious of St. Patrick kept watch over the dead, chaunting hymns and offering up prayers for the peace of the departed souls.*

Before we pause to take a review of the life and actions of this monarch, and endeavour to define, through the magnifying mist of antiquity, the true dimensions of his fame and character, there remains an episode, or rather sequel, to the great battle in which he died, too characteristic as well of the contentious as of the heroic spirit of the Irish people, not to be specially noticed.

On the evening of Holy Saturday, which was the day after the battle of Clontarf, Donchad, the son of the late monarch, who had been sent with his Dalcassians on a predatory expedition into Leinster, returned with immense booty to the camp of Kilmainham; and, as a tribute of pious affection, sent several rich offerings to the archbishop of Armagh and his community. The chief of the Eugenian tribe, Cian, who was then also with the army at Kilmainham, and whose ambition to assert his right to the now vacant throne of Munster, was too impatient to brook even decent delay, lost no time in acquainting the sons of Brian with his determination to enforce that claim; alleging, as the grounds on which he rested it, not only the right of alternate succession secured to the Eugenians by the will of Olill-Ollum, but also the seniority of their royal house over that of the Dalcassians. He, therefore, demanded that the sons of Brian should deliver hostages to him, in acknowledgment of his claim. This Donchad determinedly refused; saying that, diminished in strength and numbers as was the brave force by his side, he would neither acknowledge Cian's claim, nor yet consent to give him hostages.†

This angry contention between two such rival tribes, both encamped on the same ground, and both flushed with their common victory, seemed to threaten for a time consequences by which the mourning as well as the triumph of that memorable hour would have been sullied, when, fortunately, another Eugenian prince, named Domnal, who commanded, jointly with Cian, the troops of their tribe, interfered to check the unseemly strife; and, calmly expostulating with his brother chieftain, succeeded in withdrawing both him and the whole of their force quietly from the camp.‡

Thus relieved from the chances of a conflict to which his reduced and weakened followers were now unequal, Donchad broke up from the camp at Kilmainham, and, with his small army, including the sick and wounded, proceeded slowly on his march into Munster. Farther trials, however, awaited them ere they reached their own home; and the sudden change which a short day had made in the fortunes of the son of Brian, showed how even triumph may lead adversity in its train. On arriving in Ossory they found the prince of that country, Mac-Gilla-Patrick, preparing to oppose by force their passage through his territories, unless they consented to acknowledge submission to his authority. "Hostages," said that chief, "or battle!"§—"Let it then," replied Donchad, "be battle; for never," he added, "was it yet heard of, within the memory of man, that a prince of the race of Brian had given hostages to a Mac-Gilla-Patrick."‖

Having thus declared his purpose, the heroic chief prepared for action; first taking care, as a humane precaution, to appoint some of the bravest men of his troop to guard the sick and wounded. But, instead of allowing themselves to be so protected, these weak and suffering men all eagerly insisted upon taking their share in the combat; preferring death by the side of their comrades, to the ignoble safety proposed to them. "Let there be stakes," cried they, "fixed in the ground; and to each of these let one of us be firmly tied, holding our swords in our hands." This extraordinary suggestion was acted upon; and the troops of Ossory, on advancing to the attack, beheld intermixed in the foremost ranks with the sound men, these pale and emaciated warriors, as if all were alike determined on death. At the sight of so strange and mournful a spectacle, the advancing army paused; and their chief, whether touched with admiration of such noble self-devotion, or fearing, as the annalist suggest to contend with men thus pledged

* Annal. Ult. Annal. Inisfall. ad ann. 1014.

† Annal. Inisfall. ad an. 1014. Vallancey, from Munster Annals.

‡ Vallancey has here misrepresented the meaning of the Inisfallen annalist, making him say that Domnal "withdrew the troops under his command from supporting Cian in his pretensions;" whereas, the language of the original is, "Domhnal ag dealugh re Cian is re na múintear:" i. e. Domnal secretly departing from thence with Cian and his people."

§ "Braighde no eath."—Inisfall. *loc. citat.* ‖ Inisfall. ib.

against surrender, drew off his force without striking a blow, and left the brave Dalgais to pursue their march through Ossory uninterrupted.*

In estimating the character of Brian Boru, it will be found that there are three distinct points of view in which he stands forth prominently to the eye, namely, as a great warrior, a successful usurper, and a munificent friend to the church. In the attributes belonging to him, under these three several aspects, are to be found the main as well as subsidiary sources of his fame. The career of Brian as a military leader appears to have been uniformly, with one single exception, successful; and, from the battle of Sulchoid to that of Clontarf, his historians number no less than fifty great battles† in which he bore away the palm of victory from the Northmen and their allies.

In his usurpation of the supreme power he was impelled evidently by motives of selfish ambition; nor could he have entailed any more ruinous evil upon the country, than by thus setting an example of contempt for established rights, and thereby weakening, in the minds of the people, that habitual reverence for ancient laws and usages which was the only security afforded by the national character for the preservation of public order and peace. The fatal consequences of this step, both moral and political, will be found but too strikingly evolved in the course of the subsequent history. Attempts have been made to lend an appearance of popular sanction to his usurpation, by the plausible pretence that it was owing to the solicitations of the states and princes of Connaught, that he was induced to adopt measures for the deposition of Malachy.‡ In like manner, to give to this step some semblance of concert and deliberation, we are told of a convention of the princes of the kingdom held at Dundalk,§ preliminary to the assumption of the monarchy, and convoked in contemplation of that step.

But the truth is, for none of these supposed preparatives of his usurpation is there the slightest authority in any of our records; and the convention held at Dundealga, or Dundalk, so far from being a preliminary measure, did not take place till after "the first rebellion," as it is styled by our annalists, of the king of Munster against the monarch. This very term, indeed, applied by Tigernach, by the Annals of Inisfallen, and the Four Masters,‖ to the daring enterprise of Brian, sufficiently proves in what light it was viewed by all the most trustworthy of our historians. That the feelings of a people, whose chief occupation was warfare, would be easily enlisted on the side of the veteran of fifty battles, even in an aggression on the ancient throne of the Hy-Niells, may without difficulty be believed; but, that he ever attempted to disguise or smooth away his usurpation by any such show of respect for public opinion as his later apologists have attributed to him, is a supposition founded on modern notions, and wholly unauthorized by the authentic records of his acts; which simply state that he twice, at the head of a numerous army, entered hostilely the royal precincts of Tara; that, on the second of these occasions, he dispossessed the legitimate monarch of his authority, and placed himself on the supreme throne in his stead.

By some inquirers into his conduct, a far more enlarged and noble motive than the mere desire of self-aggrandizement, has been assigned for this bold step, which they suppose to have been dictated by the patriotic conviction that the whole strength of the country ought then to be directed unitedly against the Danes; and that it was only by the grasp of one vigorous hand, consolidating her resources and collecting her scattered energies, that so great and vital an object could be accomplished.

Of the spirit and wisdom of this view of the policy then required, there can exist no rational doubt. It was the same acted upon, as we shall see, by Brian, at an interval of nearly fourteen years after, and with perfect and glorious success. But a work neglected

* Annal. Inisfall. *ut supra.* IV. Mag. ad ann. 1001 (recte. com. 1003.)

† Mac Curten (*Brief Discourse, &c.*) He adds, however, after quoting his authorities, "The same authors say that twenty of these battles were but skirmishes, though successful; but thirty were great and destructive to the common enemies." The great English hero, Alfred, is said to have fought, by sea and land, fifty-six set battles.

‡ "Brian then was proclaimed and crowned King of Ireland by the unanimous voice of all the princes and clergy of Leath Mogha."—Mac Curten, *Brief Discourse, &c.*

"To give a good impression of his intentions, he (Brian) proposed a convention of the states, for settling the nation: Malachy agreed. The chiefs of the kingdom met at Dundalk, &c."—O'Connor, *Dissertat.* "They (the nobility of Munster) desired, therefore, that the chiefs of Connaught would join them in a resolution to depose the monarch, and set the King of Munster on the throne. This proposal being agreed to, the chiefs of the two provinces met in council, &c. &c."—*Warner.*

§ Out of this wholly unauthorized notion, which appears to have had its origin in an old life of Brian, attributed to Mac Liag, a long and circumstantial account has been fabricated of the proceedings of this alleged council, and of the negotiations that took place in consequence, not only between the monarch and Brian, but between Malachy and some of the other provincial princes; and this being exactly the sort of dull embroidery of fact in which historians like Warner delight to indulge, he has expended on it no less than seven of his diffuse quarto pages.

‖ "Cead impodh Briain."

through so long an interval, and then forced upon him by a great and perilous exigency, will hardly be assumed as one of the chief and pressing considerations that now impelled him to usurp the supreme power. On the contrary, so remote and subordinate was the place held by the Danish intruders in his views, that, though they still had possession of all the chief maritime towns of the kingdom, not a single effort did he make, during the ten or twelve years following his accession, to dislodge or molest them. But intent chiefly on strengthening and guarding his own usurped position, he left to the Danes by far the longest interval of repose they had ever been suffered to enjoy on Irish ground; content with awing, by his name, into peaceful submission as well the foreign as the native princes over whom he ruled. How little even he had transcended the level of his times, or risen to any clear views of a patriot's duty or dignity, may be judged from his employing a squadron of Danes as his vanguard in the first incursion he made into the territory of Tara; thus sanctioning, by his own example, the treason of alliance with the invader, and resorting to the ranks of his country's enemies for aid in assailing and overturning her ancient monarchy.

Of the beneficial effects attributed to his government, his wise laws and strict system of police, the numerous edifices he either built or repaired, the bridges and roads constructed by his orders throughout the country,—of these, and other such happy results of his reign, there occurs no mention whatever in our annals; nor have we, I fear, any graver authority for them, than that of the veracious chronicler, who has described so minutely the corridors, kitchens, and wine-cellar belonging to the monarch's favourite banqueting-house, Ball-Borume.*

At the same time, as peace may be not less the parent than it is, in general, the offspring of prosperity, there can be little doubt that so long and unusual a pause from warfare, as ensued on Brian's accession to the monarchy, must have been highly favourable to all those pursuits which advance the intellects and ameliorate the condition of mankind. Even his acquiescence in the continuance of the Danish settlements, however fatal it might have proved ultimately to the country's independence, was, for the time, favourable to the extension of commerce and its sure result, civilization. It is true, the disinclination of the Irish to trade,† and their consequent willingness to leave in the hands of these foreigners most of the traffic of the country, had been one of the chief sources of the apathy, or ready submission, with which they had seen all their maritime towns, one after another, become the established depositories of Danish commerce. But the example of these enterprising foreigners could hardly have been lost upon the natives: in the course of dealing with adventurous traders, they would most probably learn to be traders themselves; and it is, therefore, possible, that, during the twelve years of peace which Brian's policy maintained, the spirit of commerce may have so far diffused its civilizing influences through the land, as in some degree to justify the flattering picture which tradition has drawn of that period.

On the other hand, in bringing to the test of truth any such high coloured representations respecting princes who flourished in dark and uninstructed times, it is necessary to take into account how far, by their zeal for the worldly interests of the Church, those princes may have rendered themselves popular among ecclesiastics; as the pen of history being, in those times, guided chiefly by churchmen, would take naturally a strong bias from the partialities and temporal interests of their order. By one of those fanatics in the cause of our history and antiquities, whose deserved martyrdom is ridicule, an attempt has been made to compare Brian with the great English king Alfred,—a parallel injurious, in different senses, to both; as there is not to be found, perhaps, in the whole range of human record, a prince, warrior, or legislator, to whom, on the supposition that all we are told of him to be true,‡ the epithet Great, in its most extended heroic and moral sense, can be more justly applied than to Alfred. There exists on one important point, however, a coincidence between the two heroes, to which in sifting the nature of the evidence on which their respective reputations rest, it is not unwise to advert. They were both devout and zealous disciples of the Church, both munificent in their endowments of ecclesiastical institutions, and both, in addition to their high station in secular history,

* See O'Halloran, vol. iii. cap. 7, where, in his usual flourishing style, he describes, on the authority of the *Bruodin Chronicle*, the noble banqueting-house erected by Brian, in the neighbourhood of Kincora. "From the kitchens," he tells us, "were two long galleries, or corridors, parallel to each other, carried across a flat to this banqueting-house. A hundred servants were every day, at dinner and supper, arranged in each of these galleries. The business of one set was to pass from hand to hand, from the kitchens, the different dishes for the entertainment, and of the others with equal celerity to return them," &c. &c.

† Quoniam enim innatæ ociositatis vitio gens Hibernica, ut diximus, nec maria lustrare, nec mercaturæ indulgere aliquatenus voluerat.—*Girald. Topog. Hib.* Dist. iii. c. 43.

‡ Je ne sais s'il y a jamais eu sur la terre un homme plus digne des respects de la postérité qu' Alfred le Grand; supposé que tout ce qu'on raconte de lui soit véritable."—Voltaire, *Essai sur les Mœurs, &c.*

were, after their deaths, enrolled by the grateful Church in the number of her martyrs and saints.

The exact nature and extent of the privileges accorded by Brian to the clergy of Ireland, none of our annalists have stated. But it would be difficult to conceive any boon to have been more precious and welcome to them, than was the security his reign afforded to their holy labours and pursuits,—the respite from outrage and profanation which, during twelve years of tranquillity, they enjoyed under his sceptre. The course of our annals, which before this period, presents a series, almost uninterrupted, of the most barbarous acts of sacrilege and spoliation on the part of the Northmen, is, during the interval between his accession and the war of 1013, wholly unstained by any such horrors; and the means afforded by this season of calm for repairing the wreck of so long a hurricane, and raising from the dust their ruined and prostrate shrines, had been too long prayed for by a people innately religious not to be employed, with grateful eagerness, when it came.

Advantageous, however, as was this state of calm to the country, and ultimately creditable to the firm policy which prolonged it, yet, had Brian been snatched from the scene by any accident during this interval, far different might have been the character of the results with which his evidently selfish policy would, in that event, have been chargeable. Most fortunately, however, for his glory, the course of events was otherwise decreed. The traitorous Lagenians, by inviting a new invasion of the barbarians, aroused seasonably the veteran's slumbering vigour; and the victory of Clontarf, in putting an end to his mortal career, added also the crowning trophy to his fame.

The preparations made for this battle throughout all the dependencies, as well as the dominions of the Danes, sufficiently attest the importance attached to its issue. A foreign chronicler of the same age asserts, that the Northmen of the expedition expected to be able "to extinguish the Irish natives, and to inhabit, in their stead, that most opulent land."* The effects of the failure of the enterprise were fully proportionate to the amount of the hope it had raised, and the conflict and carnage accordingly heightened and exaggerated. The foreign chronicler just cited asserts, that the battle was maintained through three successive days, that the Northmen engaged in it were all killed, and that crowds of the women by whom they were accompanied had thrown themselves into the sea. Under the same impression, in a Scandinavian account of the battle, one of the Danish princes is represented as asking, "Where are my troops?" and the answer he receives is, "They are all slain."†

While such was the impression produced in foreign countries by this victory, its effects at home, in disheartening and breaking the strength of the Danes though not instantaneous in their operation, were not the less substantial and essential. Attempts were made, as we shall see, from time to time, by the numerous Northmen still remaining in Ireland, to make head against the native princes; but the heart of their courage had been plucked out on the memorable field of Clontarf: the blow struck in that battle by Brian was followed up worthily by his able successor, Malachy; and the sword continuing thus constantly to thin away their numbers, without any reinforcement ever arriving to them from abroad, their feeble remains at length mingled with the general mass of the population,‡ and they disappeared as a distinct people.

In thus forestalling events, so far in advance of my narrative, I have been led by a wish to impress upon the minds of my readers, that it is not without justice the popular hero of Irish history has been styled the Conqueror of the Danes; as, whatever footing they may have still retained in the country, and however, in the disgraceful feuds of the natives among themselves, the sword of the foreigner may have been appealed to alternately by both parties they were no longer formidable but as so many septs or tribes, and at length lost even that evanescent distinction,—leaving but some scattered vestige of their language in the vocabulary of a country, where they had remained in possession of the chief maritime towns for more than 200 years. The whole of their history, therefore, subsequent to the period we now have reached, fully bears out the assertion, that on the field of Clontarf was given the deathblow to the Danish power in Ireland.

* Ut Hirlandis extinctis, ipsi pro ipsis inhabitarent opulentissimam terram.—*Ademar*, ap. *Labbe*.
By a writer cited in Colgan's *Act. Sanctorum*, it is asserted, and probably with some truth, that the slaughter of that day was almost as disastrous to the Irish as to the Danes, and that neither people ever after entirely recovered it;—"Quo ingenti prælio in *Cluain Turbâ* juxta Dublinium commisso, mutuas vires ita irreparabiliter debilitarunt, ut neutra gens in hunc usque diem pristinas vires recuperaverint."

† From the *Niala Saga*, rendered, in Johnstone's version, thus; "Tunc Flosius, de meis vero sociis quid refers? Universi acie occubuerunt, ait Hrafn."

‡ From the intermarriage of Danes with the natives are said to have sprung many of our ancient families,—the Cruises, Coppingers, Dowdals, Everards, Plunkets, Revels, &c.

In comparing, indeed, the historians of England and Ireland at this period, it is impossible not to be struck by the strong contrast which they exhibit. The very same year which saw Ireland pouring forth her assembled princes and clans to confront the invader on the sea-shore, and there make of his myriads a warning example to all future intruders, beheld England unworthily cowering under a similar visitation, her king a fugitive from the scourge in foreign lands, and her nobles purchasing, by inglorious tribute,* a short respite from aggression; and while, in the English annals for this year, we find little else than piteous lamentations over the fallen and broken spirit both of rulers and people†, in the records of Ireland, the only sorrows which appear to have mingled with the general triumph are those breathed at the tombs of the veteran monarch, and the numerous chieftains who fell in that struggle by his side.

Whether Brian was himself imbued with any of the learning of the age, or possessed the yet more useful merit in a monarch of encouraging learning in others, we have not any means of ascertaining. That he was a musician has been taken for granted, on no better grounds than the rather suspicious tradition which has connected with his name a curious old Irish harp, long preserved, as we are told, in the Clanrickarde family, and supposed to have originally belonged to the hero of Clontarf. But were even the details respecting the channels through which this harp has reached us‡ entirely free from suspicion, the fact of the arms of the O'Brian family being found among the ornaments, chased in silver, on the instrument, sufficiently marks it as of too modern a date for the illustrious vocation assigned to it; as the hereditary use of armorial ensigns was unknown to Europe before the time of the Crusades, and, in England, was not established till the reign of Henry III.

It would seem a reproach to the bards of Brian's day to suppose that an event so proudly national as his victory, so full of appeals as well to the heart as to the imagination, should have been suffered to pass unsung. And yet though some poems in the native language are still extant, supposed to have been written by an Ollamh, or Doctor, attached to the court of Brian, and describing the solitude of the halls of Kincora after the death of their royal master, there appears to be, in none of these ancient poems, any allusion to the inspiriting theme of Clontarf. By the bards of the north, however, that field of death, and the name of its veteran victor, Brian, were not so lightly forgotten. Traditions of the dreams and portentous appearances that preceded the battle, formed one of the mournful themes of Scaldic song; and a Norse ode of this description, which has been made familiar to English readers,§ breathes, both in its feeling and imagery, all that gloomy wildness which might be expected from an imagination darkened by the recollections of defeat.

But a more grave, if not also more valuable testimony to the truly brave and patriotic spirit with which, up to this period, the Irish people, however degenerately they afterwards quailed before an invader, resisted every attempt to subject them to a foreign yoke,

* Henry of Huntingdon says, that, in his own times, the same tribute continued to be paid to the kings of England, from custom, which had been originally paid to the Danes under the influence of ineffable terror. "Regibus namque nostris modo persolvimus ex consuetudine quod Dacis persolvebatur ex ineffabili terrore." —fol. 205.

† "Nec fuit inventus quispiam (says Matthew of Westminster) qui hostibus obviaret." The same writer thus speaks of the wretched Ethelred:—"Inertia torpens, timidus, suspiciosus ..... exercitum congregare vel contra hostes ducere non audebat, metuens ne nobiles regni quos injuste exheredaverat, in campo eum relinquentes hostibus traderent ad damnandum."—Ad ann. 1013. Ingulfus, too, describing the same miserable times, represents the English as cowering before every assailant:—"Omnes hostes in capite super anglos semper vincere, et ex omni certamine semper prævalere."

The sermon of Bishop Lupus, preserved in Hickes's *Thesaurus*, contains some painful instances of the outrage and insult to which the Thanes were, at that gloomy period, exposed.

‡ In the account of this harp, given in the *Collectan. de. Reb. Hibern.* vol. iv., it is said that Donchad Brian's son, who, in the year 1064, went on a journey of penance to Rome, carried with him the crown, harp, and other regalia of Brian Boru, which he laid at the feet of the pope. These regalia, it is added, were deposited in the Vatican till the reign of Henry VIII., when the pope sent the harp to that monarch, with the title of Defender of the Faith, but kept the crown, which was of massive gold. Setting no value on the harp, Henry gave it to the first earl of Clanrickard, in whose family it remained till the beginning of this century, when it came, by a lady of the De Burgh family, into that of Mac Mahon of Clenagh, in the county of Clare. In the year 1782, it was presented to the right honourable William Conyngham, who deposited it in the Museum of Trinity College, where it now remains.

§ The Fatal Sisters, an Ode from the Norse tongue, by Grey. The original may be found in the *Njals Saga*. In allusion to the fate of Brian, the Scandinavian poet says, "But on the race of Irar (Erin) such a sorrow will fall as can never be forgotten among men." Out of this simple passage Grey has thus called up the spirit of poesy:

Fate demands a nobler head,
Soon a king shall bite the ground.
Long his loss shall Erin weep,
Ne'er again his likeness see,
Long her sprains in sorrow steep,
Strains of immortality.

is to be found in the remarks of an old English historian, William of Neubridge, in introducing his account of the submission of Ireland to Henry II. "It is a matter of wonder," says this writer, "that Britain, which is of larger extent, and equally an island of the ocean, should have been so often, by the chances of war, made the prey of foreign nations, and subjected to foreign rule, having been first subdued and possessed by the Romans, then by the Germans, afterwards by the Danes, and, lastly, by the Normans, while her neighbour, Hibernia, inaccessible to the Romans themselves, even when the Orkneys were in their power, has been but rarely, and then imperfectly, subdued; nor ever, in reality, has been brought to submit to foreign domination till the year of our Lord 1171."*

CHAPTER XXII.

State of the schools of Ireland in the tenth century.—Armagh still visited by strangers.—Eminent native scholars during this period.—Probus, lecturer of the school of Slane.—Eochaid O'Floinn, a Bardic historian.—Kenneth O'Artegan, a poet.—School established by the Irish in England, called Glastonbury of St. Patrick.—Monasteries of the Scots or Irish in France and Germany.—Literary works of an Irish ecclesiastic, named Duncan.—Numbers of Bishops from Ireland on the continent.—Efforts by councils to suppress them.

THE night of ignorance and barbarism, which had been so long gathering around the western world, is supposed, in the century we are now considering, to have reached its utmost gloom. How far this comparative view is well founded may be a matter of question;† but of the positive prevalence of darkness throughout this age there can exist no doubt. It is not, therefore, wonderful that even Ireland, which had hitherto stood as a beacon of learning in the west, should begin to share in the general obscuration of the times; and, being acted upon by the same causes which had already uncivilized some of the fairest regions of Europe, should feel the fated tide of barbarism gaining fast upon her shores. The exceeding rapidity with which the chief schools and monasteries throughout the country, though so frequently ravaged and burnt by the Northmen, again arose from their ashes, and resounded afresh with the voice of instruction and prayer, seems hardly less than marvellous. Nor was this intrepid and persevering enthusiasm, in the cause of learning and holiness, confined to the natives of the country alone, but inspired also its visiters; as, but a few months after a desperate inroad of the Danish spoilers into Armagh,‡ we are told of a youth of the royal house of the Albanian Scots, named Cadroe, repairing to the schools of that university for the completion of his education.§

Among the obituary notices scattered throughout the annals of this age, there occur the names of several divines who are described as learned and eminent, but of whom no farther mention is to be found. Towards the middle of the century flourished Probus, or, as his Irish name, of the same import, is said to have been, Coenachair, whose Life of St. Patrick, still extant, is praised by a high authority on the subject of our ecclesiastical history, as "a very valuable work."‖ That Probus was an Irishman, he has himself placed beyond doubt by several expressions which occur in his pages. Thus, when

* Sane hoc quoque de hac insulâ mirabile est, quod cum major Britannia, æque oceani insula, nec spacio longiori sejuncta, tantos bellorum casus experta sit, totiès exteris gentibus præda fuerit, totiès exteranam dominationem incurrerit, expugnata et possessa primo a Romanis, deinde a Germanis, consequenter a Danis, postremo a Normannis; Hibernia Romanis etiam Orchadum insularum dominium tenentibus inaccessa, raro et tepide ab ullo unquam expugnata, et subacta est, nunquam externæ subjacuit ditioni, usque ad annum a partu Virginis M. C. septuagesimum primum.—*Rerum Angl.* lib. 2. cap. xxvi.

† Leibnitz, among others, dissents from this opinion, affirming that there was more knowledge and learning in the tenth century than in either the twelfth or thirteenth. See Note on Mosheim, cent. x. part ii. chap. i.

‡ "Nimirum verè dixit scriptor vetus, quod 'in Armacha summum studium literale manet semper.' Nam studia literarum ita continenter in illa academia floruerunt, ut ne rabies quidem Danorum per sacra et profana cædibus et incendiis furosissime grassantium cursum eorum inter ruperit."—*Gratianus Lucius* c. xxii.

§ Cadroe has been sometimes claimed as an Irish Scot; but it appears evident that he was a Scot of North Britain. See *Lanigan*, chap. 23. § 2.

‖ "The Life of St. Patrick by Probus, in two books, is a very valuable work."—Lanigan. *Eccles. Hist.* vol. i. chap. 3. § 2.

speaking of the Saint embarking from Britain for Ireland, he says, that "he entered upon *our* sea; and the harbour first reached by the missionary, whom he styles "*our* most holy father, is represented by him as "one much celebrated among *us*." Probus was Chief Lecturer of the school of Slane; and fell a victim there, as already has been related, during an attack upon the church of that place by the Danes.*

In giving an account of those bardic or metrical historians by whom the adventures of our earliest colonists and the romantic achievements of the sons of Milesius, were first invented, I mentioned, as ranking among the chief contributors to this stock of fiction, a poet of the tenth century, named Eochaidh O'Floin. In the poems of this writer, of which there are a number still extant,† may be found those fables respecting Partholan, the battles of the Formorians, and the storming of the Tower of Conaing, which have all, by Keating and others, been gravely promulgated as history; and which Vallancey could not otherwise account for, than by supposing all these marvellous transactions to have taken place among the oriental ancestors of the Irish, before their departure from Greece.‡

In the year 975, according to the annalist Tigernach, took place the death of Keneth O'Artegan, "Chief of the Learned of Leath Cuinn." A poem of this writer is still preserved,§ descriptive of the beauty of the celebrated Hill of Tara, and moralizing mournfully over its history; nor should those who visit, in our days, that seat of long extinguished royalty feel any wonder on not discovering there some vestige of its grandeur, when told that, even in the time of this poet, not a trace of the original palace still remained; while the hill itself had become a desert, overgrown with grass and weeds.‖

As thus, in the midst of the general darkness of the age, there were still preserved in Ireland some relics of the lore of better days, so, in the schools and religious establishments of the continent, her sons still continued to retain all their former superiority, and, among the dwarf intellects of that time, towered as giants. In England, where, since the death of her great Alfred, both sacred and literary knowledge had sunk to so low an ebb, that at length no priest could be found capable of writing or translating a Latin letter,¶ the Irish were, in this century, the means of restoring some taste for liberal studies. With that devotion to the cause of religion and instruction which had become, in this people (as an author of those times expresses it,) a second nature, a number of Irishmen described as conversant with every department of knowledge, secular as well as sacred, retired, some time before the year 940, to Glastonbury. This monastery had already been long distinguished as a favourite retreat of their countrymen; and, within its walls, so great was the reverence felt for their patron saint,** that, from an early period, the establishment had been called "Glastonbury of St. Patrick." From the Irish who fixed themselves there in this century, the able St. Dunstan chiefly received his education; and while he imbibed, as we are told, under their discipline, the very marrow of scriptural learning,†† they also instructed him in the sciences of arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy, in all of which they were, it is intimated, more deeply skilled than in the refined niceties of classical literature.‡‡ With a taste, too, highly characteristic of their country, they

* Among the relics destroyed on this occasion were the pastoral staff of the patron saint of Slane, and "a bell (says the annalist) the best of all bells."—IV. Mag. ad. ann. 948. In Archdall's *Monastic. Hibern.* these last words are incorrectly translated "the best *clock* in Ireland," on the strength of which mistake, combined with the mention of a "clock" in king Cormac's pretended Will, some sapient persons have claimed for the Irish of those times a knowledge of the art of clock making.

† See for an account of these poems, the *Transactions of the Iberno-Celtic Society*, ad. ann. 984.

‡ It is much to be regretted that, though in many respects so qualified to illustrate and advance the study of Irish antiquities, Vallancey, through false zeal and fantastic speculation, should have ended only in drawing down ridicule on the subject. One of his earliest essays, "The Laws of Tanistry illustrated," to which I have frequently had occasion to refer in these pages, shows how well and usefully he could turn to account the materials contained in our own authentic annals, without calling in the aid of the Sadder of Zerdusht, or of his favourite "Pishdadian Dynasty."—See *Vindication of the Ancient History of Ireland*, Collectan. vol. iv.

§ Trans. Iberno-Celt. Society, ad ann. 975.

‖ If this poem be not antedated by a century or two, the mansion which Malachy and his immediate predecessors in the throne of Tara must have recently occupied, at the time when the poet wrote, could not have been the same, of course, nor built upon the same site with that whose ruin and utter disappearance he bewails.

¶ "Very few churchmen were there," says Alfred, "on this side the Humber, who could understand their daily prayers in English, or translate any letter from the Latin. I think there were not many beyond the Humber; they were so few, that I, indeed, cannot recollect one single instance on the south of the Thames when I took the kingdom."—See Turner, *Hist. Anglo-Sax.* book v. chap. 1. A few years before the Norman conquest (says Mr. Berington, on the authority of William of Malmesbury,) "the clergy could hardly stammer through the necessary service of the church, and he who knew the rules of grammar was viewed as a prodigy."

** Nec Normannorum solùm sed Angiosaxonum quoque temporibus sacro-sanctam apud Glastonienses B. Patricii fuisse memoriam, Baldredi, Ine et Ealdredi ostendunt Chartæ.—Usher, *Eccles. Primord*

†† Horum ergo disciplinatu sacram scripturam medullitus ad extremam satietatem exhausit.—Gulielm. Malmesbur. *Vit. S. Dunstan.*

‡‡ Arithmeticam porro cum geometria et astronomia ac musica, quæ appendent, gratanter addidicit, et diligenter excoluit. Harum scientiarum Hibernienses pro magno pollicentur; cæterum ad formanda Latine verba et ad integre loquendum minus idonei.—*Ibid.*

succeeded in awakening in their pupil so strong a love and talent for music, that it was in after life his frequent practice, when worn with business or study, to fly for refreshment to the soothing sounds of the harp.*

On the continent of Europe, in like manner, the fame of the Island of Saints continued to be upheld by the learning and piety of her sons; and in the course of this century, there flourished in France, as well as in Germany and the Netherlands, a number of eminent Irishmen, whose names belong not so much to the country which gave them birth, as to those which they benefited by the example and labours of their lives. Among the prelates present at a synod held in the year 947, at Verdun, was an Irish bishop named Israel, whose character and accomplishments must have been of no ordinary stamp, as he had been one of the instructors of the great and learned archbishop Bruno, the brother of the emperor Otho.†

An Irish abbot of considerable celebrity, named Fingan, who had been honoured with the notice and patronage of the dowager empress Adelhard, the zealous relict of Otho the Great, was, through her interest, invested with the government of the abbey of Symphorian, at Metz, on the singular condition that he and his successors should receive no other than Irish monks into their establishment, as long as any such could be found; but, in case of a deficiency of monks from Ireland, should then be allowed to admit those of other nations.‡

Another of these "monasteries of the Scots," as they were to a late period called, had been established about this time on an island in the Rhine, near Cologne, having for its first abbot an Irishman named Mimborin; and it is clearly to this establishment at Cologne that such frequent reference is made in the Annals of the Four Masters, and others.§ Helias, a successor to this abbot, had, previously to his departure from Ireland, belonged to the monastery of Monaghan;—one of many proofs of the close intercourse then maintained between the foreign religious establishments and those of Ireland.

Of the attention early paid to the study of Greek in the native schools of the Irish, some notice has already been taken; and a proof of their continued attention to the cultivation of that language is to be found in the interesting fact, that, in the diocese of St. Gérard, at Toul, where there had assembled at this time a number of Greek refugees, as well as of Irish, the church service, in which both nations joined, was performed in the language of the Greeks, and according to the Greek rite.‖

One of the few of our learned countrymen at this period, who have left behind them any literary remains, was an Irish bishop named Duncan, or Duncant, who taught in the monastery of St. Remigius, at Rheims, and wrote for the use of the students under his care a "Commentary on the Nine Books of Martianus Capella,"—an author whose claims to attention, such as they are, concern the musician rather than the scholar,¶—and also, "Observations on the First Book of Pomponius Mela, De Situ Terræ;" both of which writings are still extant.

With respect to those Irish bishops we frequently read of, as connected with foreign religious establishments, and passing their whole lives abroad, it is right to explain, that there existed at this time a custom in Ireland of raising pious and exemplary monks to episcopal rank, without giving them any fixed sees. In addition to these there was also, as in the primitive times of the Church, an order of Chorepiscopi, or country bishops, to whom the care of the rural districts was entrusted, with powers subordinate to those of the regular bishop in whose diocese they were situated. From these two classes of ministers were furnished, doubtless, the great majority of those Episcopi Vagantes, or

* Ispe citharam, si quando à literis vacaret, sumere.—Guliclm. Malmesbur. *Vit. S. Dunstan.*

† Lanigan, *Ecclesiast. Hist.* chap. xxiii. § 4.

‡ A copy of the deed, confirming the rights and possessions of the establishment on this condition, is given by Colgan in the *Acta Sanctorum;* and the stipulation, as expressed in the deed, is as follows:—"Ea videlicet ratione, ut abbas primus nomine Fingenius *Hibernienses natione*, quem ipse prælibatus episcopus tunc temporis ibi constituit, suique successores *Hibernienses monachos* habeant, quamdiu sic esse poterit; et si defuerint ibi *monachi de Hibernia*, de quibuscumque nationibus semper ibi monachi habeantur."

§ IV. Mag. ad an. 1042. and 1052. An. Ult. 1042. In the Ulster Annals for the year 1027, we find the following record:—"The wisest of the Scots in Cologne died."

‖ The following is the account given of this circumstance by the Benedictines, in one of those clever sketches prefixed by them to the several volumes of their valuable work:—"Un autre moien qui servit beaucoup à repandre la connoissance de cette langue parmi nos Français fûrent ces Grecs aux quels S. Gérard, Evêque de Toul, donna retraite dans son diocèse. Ils y formerent des communautés entières avec des Hibernois qui s'étoient melés avec eux, et y faisoient separément l'office divin en leur langue et suivant leur rit particulier. L'établissement de ces communautés de Grecs est tout-à-fait remarquable."—*Hist. Littéraire.*

¶ A manuscript copy of this work of Duncan, which was formerly in the monastery of St. Remigius, at Rheims, is deposited at present in the British Museum.—*Bibliothec. Reg.* 15. A. xxxiii. The name of the transcriber is Gifardus, and on the margins of some of the pages there are very neatly traced with the pen various geometrical figures. By an odd confusion, Stuart, in his History of Armagh, states that Duncant, an Irish bishop, delivered lectures in St. Remigius's monastery, in *Down.*—Append. No. 5.

"vague bishops," as they were called, of whom such numbers, principally Irish, were found on the continent in the middle ages; and whose assumed power of ordaining came at length to be so much abused, that, at more than one Council, an effort was made to abate the evil, by declaring all such ordinations to be null and void.* Notwithstanding, however, such occasional laxity of discipline, it is admitted by one of the most liberal as well as most learned of theologians, that the bishops of this description from Ireland were of great service, as well to the Gallican as the Germanic church.†

CHAPTER XXIII.

Restoration of the monarch Malachy.—His victories over the remains of the Northmen.—Battle at the Yellow Ford.—Death of Malachy.—Social state of Ireland at this period.—Decline of religion and morals throughout the country.—Ecclesiastical abuses.—Corbes and Erenachs.—Succession of the monarchy suspended.—Provisional government established.—Kingdom of Munster ruled jointly by Teige and Donchad, the sons of Brian.—Murder of Teige through the contrivance of his brother.—Donchad, titular monarch of Ireland.—Turlogh, his nephew, aspires to the throne.—Is supported by the princes of Leinster and Connaught.—Donchad, defeated, flies to Rome.—Turlogh, monarch of Ireland.—Events of his reign.—Death.—Is succeeded by Murkertach.

When the mortal wound received by Morough, the son of Brian, in the battle of Clontarf, had deprived the army of the presence of its acting leader, the command devolved, as we have seen, on the patriotic and high-minded Malachy, by whom the victory, then all but accomplished, was followed up to its full and perfect success. Almost immediately, too, without, as it appears, any preparatory process or intervening forms, this prince reassumed the high station from which he had been so wrongfully deposed,‡ and was acknowledged, by tacit and general assent, supreme monarch of Ireland. Could any doubt exist, as to the view taken in Brian's own times, of the lawless means by which he got possession of the supreme throne, the ready acquiescence, if it did not amount even to loyal satisfaction, with which the same prince, who had been so triumphantly set aside twelve years before, was now seen to resume his due station, would be sufficiently convincing on this point; —showing, at once, how strong was still in the popular mind the regard for hereditary right, and how bold and powerful must have been the hand that had dared so successfully to violate it.§

Attempts have been made by some modern historians, as already has been remarked, to invest with an appearance of respect for the popular voice the self-willed act of the usurper. But the general feeling entertained on the subject, in times bordering on those of Brian, may be collected from the manner in which the annalist Tigernach, who wrote in the following century, has recorded the death of Malachy. Not acknowledging those twelve years, during which the usurpation lasted, to have been any interruption of the rule of the legitimate monarch, this chronicler states, as the period of Malachy's reign, the whole of the forty-three years which intervened between his first accession to the throne and his death;—thus denying to the name of Ireland's great hero any place in the list of her legitimate monarchs.‖ It should be added, too, that in this tacit but significant verdict on the lawless act of Brian, the old chronicler has been faithfully followed by the writers of the Annals of Ulster.

The calumnious story referred to in a former chapter, of Malachy's treachery in drawing off his troops during the heat of the action at Clontarf, has already been disposed of

* In consequence of this abuse, it was decreed by the council of Calcuith (A. D. 816.) that no Irishman should be permitted to exercise clerical duties:—"Ut Scoti non admittentur sacra ministrare."

† *Mabillon.*—"Plurimum ecclesiæ tum Gallicanæ tum Germanicæ profuisse."—*Annal. Benedictin.* sæc. ii. præf.

‡ IV. Mag. 1014 (sive com. 1015.)

§ Inisfall. ad an. 1016. 1016. Ware, *Antiquities*, c. xxiv.

‖ Those who are guided by less strict views of legitimacy in their calculation limit Malachy's reign to the thirty-four years during which he occupied the throne. "Quem codex Cluanensis (says Colgan) tradit 43 annis regnasse, alii vero communiter 35."—*Trias Thaum. Sect. Append. ad Act. S. Patric.*

as it deserved; but, were any farther refutation of the calumny wanting, we should find it, not only in the fact alleged by the Four Masters of his heading the army after the fate of its leader Morough, but also in the prompt and according assent of the whole nation to his immediate resumption of the supreme power, and the instant vigour with which, on his accession, leaving no respite to the remnant of the Danish force, he attacked them in their head-quarters, Dublin, and, setting fire to the citadel and the houses around it, destroyed the greater part of that city.*

In the following year, these daring ravagers, having received some recruitment of their force, again poured forth, under the command of their king Sitric, extending the course of their depredations over all the region then called Hy-Kinsellagh. But the monarch, with the aid of his kindred, the southern Hy-Niells, surprised the spoilers in the midst of their havoc, and put them to the rout with immense slaughter.† About the same time, a signal instance of retribution was exhibited in the fate of the royal family of Leinster, whose reigning prince, the son and successor of that king, who had been the promoter of the late coalition against Ireland, was deprived of his eyes—the usual mode of incapacitating a prince from reigning—by order of the Danish king, Sitric.‡ In consequence of this and similar outrages, the people of Leinster, at length provoked into resistance, gained, at Delgany, a complete victory over the fierce Sitric and his Danes.§

Decisive and prompt as appear to have been the measures of Malachy, it is evident that the strong grasp by which, in his predecessor's time the swarm of minor kings had been curbed and kept down was now no longer felt; and, accordingly, in the north and west, as well as in the south, his presence was called for to repress pretensions and revolts.

A. D. 1016. In the year 1016—a year distinguished in our annals by the rare record of "Peace in Erin"‖—the monarch proceeded at the head of an army to Ulster, and compelled the princes of that province to deliver to him hostages. In the course of the following year we find him again wreaking his revenge on the restless Danes, at a place called Odhba; and in 1018, the O'Niells of the north, being up in arms, assisted by the warlike tribe of the Eugenians, he hastened to encounter their joint force, having gained an easy victory over them, drove the Eugenians, as it is stated, "beyond the mountain Fuad, towards the north."¶ About the same time, a portion of his army committed great slaughter upon the Fercallians, a people of the district now called the King's County; and in the year 1020, accompanied by the O'Niells, and by Donchad, the son of Brian, with his Dalcassians, the monarch marched at the head of an army into Connaught, and received hostages from the kings of that province.**

A. D. 1020. In approaching the close of this eminent prince's career, it should not be forgotten, among his other distinguished merits, that, unlike the greater part of those chieftains who flourished in what may be called the Danish period, he never, in any one instance, sullied his name by entering into alliance with the foreign spoilers of his country; and as the opening year of his reign had been rendered memorable by a great victory over the Danes, so, at the distance of nearly half a century, his closing hours were cheered by a triumph over the same restless, but no longer formidable foe.†† In the summer of the year 1022, being summoned to the field by some aggression of the Northmen, he encountered their force at the Yellow Ford, a place now called Athboy,

A. D. 1022. and defeated them with great slaughter. Retiring, soon after the battle, to a small island upon the Lake Annin, in Meath, he there devoted his last hours to penitence and prayer; being attended in his dying moments by the three Comorbans, or successors of St. Patrick, St. Columba and St. Ciaran: one of his latest cares being to endow a foundation for the support of 300 orphan children, to be selected out of the principal cities of the island; an act of beneficence which, as it appears from distichs quoted by Tigernach and the Four Masters,‡‡ some poets of that day commemorated.§§

In taking a review of the authentic portion of Irish history we have now traversed, and, to avoid controversy, confining that portion within the interval only that has elapsed from about the time of the monarch Niell, (A. D. 406,) called, "Niell of the Nine Hostages,"¶¶ it will be found that, though wanting, perhaps, in that variety of adventure

* IV. Mag. ad an. 1014 (1015.) † Annal. Inisfall. ad an. 1016.
‡ Inisfall. ad an. 1018. Ware. ad an. 1019.
§ Ware's *Annals*, ad an. 1022. IV. Mag. ap. *Colgan.*
‖ "Sith in Erind." Annal. Ult.
¶ "Tar sliabh Fuait fo thuaidh." This name, Fuad, occurs frequently in the annals, but it does not appear what particular mountain is designated by it.
** IV. Mag. Inisfall.
†† IV. Mag. ad an. 1021. (ære com. 1022.) Tigernach, ad an. 1022, &c.
‡‡ Cited in *Rer. Hib. Script.* Prol. 2. liv.
§§ IV. Mag. ad an. 1023. *Rer. Hib. Script.*
¶¶ See c. 7, p. 88 of this Work.

which enlivens the annals of less secluded nations, there yet belong to our history some sources of interests, which, owing to this very seclusion, are peculiar to itself; rendering it a record and picture of a state of society altogether, perhaps, unexampled, and such as is not unworthy of engaging the attention, as well of the philosopher as of the historian and antiquarian.

The first emergence of this people to the notice of Europe, with so many of the marks of an ancient state of civilization impressed strongly upon their language, traditional customs, and institutions, while they themselves were but little elevated above the level of savage life; the docile intelligence with which they received and appreciated the doctrines of Christianity, and, soon after, started forth as the apostles and teachers of Western Europe, in every walk of learning, both sacred and secular, leaving the name of their country associated, to the present day, with most of the institutions established, in those times, for the purposes of religion and instruction;—all this honourable celebrity of the Irish abroad, followed by their long and manful struggle against the Danish power at home, and finally, the death-blow dealt, on the field of Clontarf, to the domination of that people in Ireland, at a time when England and other great states of Europe had been forced to bow beneath their yoke, presents altogether a career of such various and entirely self-derived energy, as few countries, within the same compass of time, have been ever known to exhibit; and which, notwithstanding the fierce and lawless excesses that stain so many of its pages, cannot but entitle the history which records so remarkable a course of affairs to a more than ordinary share of attention and interest.

The reader will recollect that these observations are applied solely to the period commencing at the reign under which St. Patrick made his first appearance in Ireland, and ending with the death of Malachy II. From this latter epoch the aspect of affairs began materially to change, and the country sank by degrees into a state of obscuration, both moral and political. The causes of this national declension, the greater number of which had been for some time in operation, shall be pointed out as they more fully developed themselves in this and the following century; but among the most operative, doubtless, was the state of confusion and disorganization into which the whole framework of the government of the country had been thrown by Brian's forcible infringement of the law which had been so long observed in the course of succession to the monarchy. In a land so parcelled out into sovereignties, and through which there circulated, in every direction, so many rival currents of royal blood, it was of the utmost importance to the preservation of the public peace, that their channels should be kept distinct and sacred; and in the instance of the monarchy, so effectual was prescriptive usage for this purpose, that, with only two exceptions (of which one was Brian*) all the monarchs of Ireland, for more than five hundred years, had been elected from among the princes of the Hy-Niell race. By the usurpation of Brian, however, this sacred boundary was overleaped; this last stronghold against aristocratic pretensions was overthrown, and a new impulse given to the efforts of irregular ambition, throughout the country, by the crown of Tara being added to the prizes in the arena of political strife.

The long struggle, also, with the Danes, besides accustoming the people to scenes of rapine and blood, was attended with other evils and influences still more permanently demoralizing. The habit of employing, and being employed by, these freebooters, as hired auxiliaries, in local and factious feuds, without any regard to the national honour or interests, could not but confuse, in the public mind, the boundaries of right and wrong, and at last lead to that state of moral degradation† which both disposes and fits men to be slaves. Nor did the ecclesiastical part of the community, from whose example and influence might be expected some salutary check to the growing degeneracy of their countrymen, keep the standard of their own morals sufficiently high to admit of their rebuking the offences of others with much effect. An eminent churchman, indeed, of the twelfth century, in referring to the moral darkness into which Ireland had then fallen, notices, particularly among the causes—if they were not rather, perhaps, results—of that declension, the utter relaxation of ecclesiastical discipline, and a general decay of religious feeling among the people.‡

* The other was Bœtan. See ancient Irish MS. quoted by Dr. O'Connor, *Ep. Nunc.* "Vetus scriba, qui seculo XI. Ængusii colidei opera descripsit, ex Codice Psalter na Rann, cujus extat exemplar annorum 600, in Codice Bodleiano, Laud F 95. fol. 75. inquit, 'Nullum regem Hiberniam tenuisse post Patricium nisi ex semine Herimonis, exceptis duobus, Bœtan et Brian.'" The MS. adds, that some ancient authorities did not admit Bœtan among the monarchs, thus leaving Brian the sole exception to the ancient rule of succession.

† Peter Lombard thus feelingly mourns over this declension of Ireland's glory:—"Sed prob dolor! Hibernia priore illa gloriâ paulatim ita excidit, ut quæ tot sanctorum honorifica pridem mater ac magistra, nunc eo se dejecta videat quo illa quondam sancta civitas Domina gentium Jerusalem cecidit."—*De regno Hibern. Senctor. Insula Comment. Præfat.*

‡ S. Bernard.—"Inde tota illa per universam Hyberniam, de quâ multa superius diximus, dissolutio ecclesiasticæ disciplinæ, censuræ enervatio, religionis evacatio," &c. &c.—*Vita Malach.*

Among the ecclesiastical abuses referred to by him, was one that had begun to prevail some time before this period, having been introduced, almost simultaneously, into different countries of Europe;—and that was the practice of allowing laymen to hold possession of church lands (even of lands belonging to episcopal sees,) and to transmit them to their own descendants, or, at least, to the sept to which they belonged. Of the holders of this sort of property, in Ireland, there were two distinct classes, or ranks, of which one were called Corbes, or Comorbans,* and the other Erenachs; and the only difference that has been yet very clearly made out between them, is that the Erenachs were a class inferior in wealth and dignity, and far more numerous than that of the Comorbans.

In an essay written on this subject, in his youth, by archbishop Usher, it is assumed that the Comorbans, at their first institution, were the same as those Chorepiscopi, or rural bishops, of whom mention has already been made. But that this is a mistake will appear from the fact, that the Chorepiscopi were most of them invested with episcopal powers, while the Comorbans were, in general, laymen, who, holding a position, as it appears, analagous to that of the lay-abbots,† or abbacomites, in France, appropriated to themselves the abbatial lands and other properties, leaving to the clergy only the altars, tithes, and dues.‡ In like manner, the Irish Erenachs, whose title originally signifies archdeacon, bore a no less close resemblance to those holders of church property in the time of Charlemagne,§ who, though assuming the title of archdeacon, were, in reality, laymen, and, in some instances, farmed the property.‖ The lands held in this manner, in Ireland, were called Termon, or free lands, and the possessors paid out of them a certain yearly rent to the bishop, besides some other contributions towards ecclesiastical purposes. Such, as far as I am able to unravel the perplexed statements on this subject,—which has become but the more entangled the more hands it has passed through,—was the nature of this tenure of church property, which did not in Ireland, probably, come into use till after the age of Charlemagne, but continued to be retained here to as late a period as the reign of James I.

There is yet one difficulty, or rather confusion, as regards the use of the term Comorban. Though employed to signify a lay possessor of lands and property which had been usurped, at some time or other, from the Church, it was used also as a distinguishing title of the successive occupants of the great Irish sees; and the Comorban of St. Patrick, the Comorban of St. Fiech, of St. Bridget, &c.,¶ was the mode of designation generally employed in speaking of the successors of those eminent saints in the high dignities they had respectively founded. The use of the title, indeed, extended even to the pope, whom it was not unusual to call the Comorban of St. Peter; and the fact appears to be, that this term, which signifies a successor in any ecclesiastical dignity, came to be applied, not merely to those who had legitimately succeeded to property in the church, but also to those who, being laymen, had become possessors of it only by usurpation; much in the same manner as in Charlemagne's time, when the title of abbot was bestowed alike on the religious heads of monasteries, on lay lords, and even on soldiers;** and when archdeaconries, held in fee, stood side by side with those of episcopal appointment.

In consequence of the suspended state of the succession to the monarchy, there ensued now a long and ruinous interregnum, during which the evils arising from the want of a supreme, directing head, were aggravated a hundred fold by the fierce rivalry and dis-

* For opinions and authorities respecting this class of persons, the reader is referred to Archbishop Usher's treatise on the subject. (*Collectan. de Reb. Hib.* vol. i.) Ware's *Antiquities*, c. xxxv. Sir John Davies's *Letter to the Earl of Salisbury*; Campbell's *Strictures on the Hist. of Ireland*, sect. 10; and Dr. Lanigan's *Ecclesiast. Hist.* vol. iv. c. 26, note 63. The account given by most of these writers of this class of holders of church property, is far from being satisfactory. Dr. Lanigan alone,—though, as usual, diffuse and careless in the arrangement of his learned materials,—deals with the subject so as to inspire confidence in his opinion.

† Giraldus makes use of this very term in speaking of the lay intruders into church property, who were common in Wales as well as in Ireland. "Notandum autem, quod hæc ecclesia (S. Paterni) sicut et alias per Hiberniam et Walliam plures, abbatem laicum habet."—*Itiner. Cambr.* lib. ii. cap. 4.

‡ It would appear, from the letter of Sir John Davies just referred to, that this class of proprietors had, in his time, got into their possession almost all the church lands in Ireland. In speaking of Fermanagh, he says, "It did not appear to me that the bishop had any land in demesne, but certain mensal duties of the Corbes and Erenachs; neither did we find that the parsons and vicars had any glebe land at all in this country." In another place he adds, "Certain it is that these men possess all the glebe lands which belongeth to such as have the cure of souls."

§ In being hereditary, says Spelman, the office of Erenach resembled that of the Vicedomini Ecclesiarum, on the continent:—"Sic enim hereditarium in Hibernia fit munus Herenaci, non minus quam in partibus transmarinis vicedomini."—*Gloss. in voce.*

‖ "Hinc archidiaconatus, ipsum archidiaconi munus; quos feudi jure possessos à viris secularibus, etiam tempore Caroli magni, patet ex ejus capitulari 1 A. C. 805., c. 15., &c. ubi illud vetitum. Archidiaconatus quoque *dati ad firmam.*"—*Hoffman, in voce.*

¶ With an ignorance of his subject not rare in this writer, Dr. Campbell says (*Strictures*, sect. 10.)—"Hence we are given to understand why so many Comorbans of St. Patrick became primates;" the fact being, that it was their becoming primates that made them Comorbans of St. Patrick.

** See note on this page. In an old document preserved by Catel, in his *Memoirs of Languedoc* (lib. v.,) it is said,—"Ut tunc temporis erat mos milites tenere archidiaconatus."

cord which such a state of things could not but engender, and keep in perpetual activity. Among those princes, indeed, who, during the remainder of Ireland's existence as a separate nation, assumed the title of monarch, there were scarcely any, we shall find, who had been elected according to the regular ancient form, or were acknowledged generally by the people; and the nature both of their authority and their claims may be sufficiently judged from the designation given to them by our native historians, who call them *Righ go freasabra*, that is, "Kings with reluctance or opposition."

But though the train for all these evil consequences had been now laid, their fated explosion did not take place till some time after; for it is not the least striking and characteristic of the circumstances which attended the demise, as it may almost be called, of the Irish monarchy, in the person of Malachy II., that, on the death of this prince, not even a pretender to the right of succeeding him appeared to put forth his claims;—as though there existed a feeling, tacitly, throughout the country, that even the vacancy of the ancient seat of the Hy-Niells were preferable to the fierce and sanguinary strife which any attempt to take possession of it would provoke. As a sort of provisional substitute for the authority of the monarch, an arrangement was made, through the interposition, most probably, of the Church, by which the administration of the principality of Meath, and of some of the adjoining districts, was placed in the hands of Cuan O'Lochan, chief poet and antiquarian of Ireland,* and an ecclesiastic named Corcoran, who is styled Primate of the Irish Anchorites. In a year or two after, the name of this Cuan is found among the obituary notices; and it is highly probable that the government he had presided over did not survive himself, as it would appear, from the subsequent history of the princes of Meath, that they thenceforth took the administration of that principality into their own hands.

It might have been expected, that at such a crisis the name of the popular champion, Brian, his vigorous career as supreme ruler, and his brilliant achievement, still so recent, would have established some claim in favour of the sons he had left behind. But even by them not a single movement was now made to lay claim to a throne around which their father had thrown so lasting a lustre. At the time of his death, there survived but two of his sons, Teige and Donchad, and their first joint task on the occurrence of that event was to defend, in opposition to the claims of the Eugenian tribe, their own right of succession to the throne of Munster. But the good understanding between these brothers was of very short continuance. Preferring, like most other Irish septs and families, royal or otherwise, destructive strife among themselves, to co-operation, for common interests, against others, they came, at length, to open warfare, and a desperate battle between them ensued,† in which the Prince of Aradia, and other chieftains of distinguished station, lost their lives.‡ Through the mediation, however, of the clergy of Munster, the two brothers were soon after reconciled,§ and continued coregnants in the throne of Munster till the year 1023, when, on some new cause of contention breaking out, Donchad concerted a plot against his brother's life, and, delivering him up into the hands of the people of Eile, had him basely murdered.‖ A. D. 1023.

By this guilty act, Donchad secured to himself the sole undivided sovereignty of Munster; and, as homage was paid, and hostages delivered to him by the princes and states of Connaught, as well as also by the Danes of Dublin and Leinster,¶ the range of his dominion is considered by some of our antiquarians** sufficiently extensive to entitle him to a place in the list of Ireland's kings; while others who require a more widely extended foundation for that title, exclude Donchad's name altogether from their select album of Irish monarchs.

He was soon to encounter, however, a young and formidable rival, in his own nephew, Turlough, the son of the murdered Teige, whom, immediately after the violent death of that prince, he had, with the half policy by which the guilty so frequently undermine their own schemes, sent into exile in the province of Connaught. Received favourably by the chiefs of that kingdom, and adopted with affectionate zeal by his kinsman, Dermot, the King of Leinster, the young prince's own military accomplishments soon justified

* O'Flaherty, *Ogygia*, c. 94. O'Connor, *Rer. Hib. Script.* tom. ii. p. 178. note. For this provisional government of Cuan I can find no authority in any of our regular annals.

† Vallancey, from *Munster Records, Law of Tunistry.*

‡ Annal. Ult. § Ibid.

‖ Tigernach, and IV. Mag. ad an. 1023.

¶ Tigernach and Inisfall. ad an. 1026. Vallancey, *in loc.*

** "Hinc in regum hujus 9di ordinis enumeratione, scriptores nostri fluctuant inter æmulos reges provinciarum, prout major erat cujusque potentia. Sic Donchadum O'Brian, Briani Borromæi filium, aliqui regem Hiberniæ et Malachiæ successorem appellant, alii Diarmitium filium Maelnamboi (Lageniæ regem) eodem titulo decorant."

the reception he had met with, and rendered him a powerful instrument in the hands of these chieftains, against a liege lord whom they so reluctantly served. At the head of a considerable force, furnished in aid of his cause by those provinces, Turlough invaded the dominions of his uncle, and succeeded in compelling him to exonerate Connaught from all claim of tribute.* A similar concession, in favour of the Lagenians, was extorted, a year or two after, from the now humbled Donchad, who, driven to extremity by such repeated reverses, having been, in the year 1058, totally defeated by the combined force of these two provinces,† at length summoned together all his means and re-

A. D. 1063. sources for one decisive effort. Encountering, at the foot of the Ardagh mountains, the united armies of Connaught and Leinster, under the command of Turlough, he there sustained a complete and irretrievable overthrow;‡ in consequence of which, despairing of all farther chance of success, he, in the following year, surrendered the kingdom of Munster to his victorious nephew, and, in the hope of atoning for his sins by penitence and prayer, set out on a pilgrimage to Rome. There, entering into the monastery of St. Stephen, he died in the year 1064, with the reputation, as it appears, of having been a very sincere penitent.§

According to some writers, this royal pilgrim took away with him to Rome the crown of Ireland and laid it at the feet of the pope; and it is certain that instances were by no means uncommon of princes laying, in those times, their crowns and kingdoms at the feet of the popes, and receiving them back as fiefs of the Holy See. But, besides that in none of our authentic annals is any mention made of such an act of Donchad, it does not appear how the crown of Ireland could have been disposed of by him, having never, in fact, been in his possession;‖ and his own crown of Munster he had, previously to his departure, transferred to his nephew's brow. The tale was most probably, therefore, invented in after times, either for the purpose of lending a colour to the right assumed by pope Adrian of bestowing the sovereignty of Ireland upon Henry II., or, at a still later period, for the very different purpose of furnishing Irishmen with the not inconvenient argument, that, if former popes possessed the power of bestowing on the English the right of sovereignty over Ireland, there appeared no reason whatever why future popes should not give back the dominion to its first rightful owners.

By his second marriage, Donchad had become connected with the family and, in some degree, fortunes of the great English Earl Godwin, having married Driella, the daughter of that statesman, and sister of Harold, afterwards King of England. During the rebellion of Godwin and his sons against Edward the Confessor, Harold, being compelled to take refuge in Ireland, remained in that country, says the Saxon Chronicle "all the winter on the King's security;"¶ and in the following year, having been furnished by Donchad with a squadron of nine ships, he proceeded on a predatory expedition along the southern coast of England.

Whatever may have been thought of the quality of this king's legislation, the fault of being deficient in quantity could not, assuredly, be objected to it, as we are told that, in the course of his reign, there were more taxes raised, and more ordinances issued, than during the whole interval that had elapsed from the time of the coming of St. Patrick.** A custom encouraged, if not introduced, by Donchad, was that of celebrating games, or athletic sports, on the sabbath day;—the cæstus, or gloves, used by the pugilists, at these games, being distributed, it is said, in the king's own mansion.††

On the abdication of the crown of Munster, by Donchad, his nephew Turlough became

* Inisfall. ad an. 1053, 1054.
† Inisfall. IV. Mag. ad an. 1058.
‡ Tigernach. IV. Mag. ad an. 1063.
§ Ibid. ad an. 1064.
‖ Whether the kings of Ireland wore any sort of crown whatever, has been a matter of doubt with antiquarians. In the preface to Keating's history there is an account given of a golden cap, supposed to be a provincial crown, which was found in the year 1692, in the county of Tipperary. "This cap, or crown," it is said, "weighs about five ounces; the border and the head is raised in chase-work, and it seems to bear some resemblance to the close crown of the eastern empire, which was composed of the helmet together with the diadem, as the learned Selden observes in his Titles of Honour."—*Hist. of Ireland*, Preface by the Translator. A representation of this crown is given in Ware's *Antiq.* Plate I. No. 2.
¶ Ad ann. 1051.
** Inisfall. (Cod. Bodleian) ad an. 1023 (ære com. 1040.)
†† Ibid. According to the version of Gratianus Lucius, a very different meaning is here to be attributed to the annalist, whom he represents as asserting that Donchad was a most religious observer of the sabbath, and forbade that any one should carry burdens, or hold hunting-matches or fairs on that day. "Dil Dominicæ religiosissimus cultor vetuit onera diebus Dominicis vehi, aut nundinas venationesve fieri." Instead of asserting, too, that "*more* laws" had been passed in that reign than during the whole interval from the time of St. Patrick, the annalist is made to say, "*better* laws"—"Annales iidem (Inisfallenses) leges ab eo latas fuisse narrant quibus pares á S. Patricii diebus, in Hibernia non ferebantur." On referring to the original, the Irish scholar will, I rather think, pronounce the version which I have above adopted to be the most correct. O'Halloran, who, it is clear, had not consulted the original, follows Lynch's interpretation. "Several severe laws," he says, "were passed by Donchad against robbers, murderers, and profaners of the sabbath."

his successor; and this prince is, by most of the authorities on the subject allowed to take rank among Ireland's nominal monarchs;* though some, who consider his claims as inferior to those of his ally and kinsman, Dermot, king of Leinster, scrupulously withhold from him, during the lifetime of the latter, the full title of monarch.† So unfixed and arbitrary, indeed, are the grounds upon which this merely titular honour is awarded, that frequently the preference felt for any particular candidate, by the writer who treats on the subject, suffices for his decision of the question; and accordingly while some perceive in the achievements of Donchad and Dermot sufficient grounds for their enrolment among Ireland's monarchs, others exclude these same princes from that dignity altogether. If a generous sacrifice of his own interests to those of others might be taken into account among Dermot's titles to supremacy, his claims would be of no common order; as the liberal aid he, from the first, proffered to the young Turlough, enabling him to assert and obtain his birthright, lends a moral dignity to his character, far surpassing any that mere rank could bestow, and justifying, in a great degree, the eulogy bestowed upon him by the Welsh chronicler, Caradoc, who pronounces him to have been "the best and worthiest prince that ever reigned in Ireland."‡

On the death of Dermot,§ who was killed in the battle of Obdha, in Meath, there remained no competitor to dispute the supremacy with Turlough, who, taking the field at the head of his troops, was acknowledged with homage wherever he directed his march. Proceeding to Dublin, he found the gates of that city thrown open to receive him; and the Danes, together with their king Godfred, placing their hands in his hands,‖ as a pledge that their power was to be thenceforth employed as his own, acknowledged him for their liege lord and sovereign. The same forms of submission were complied with by the kings of Meath and of Ossory, as well as by the princes of the province of Connaught; all delivering to him hostages and acknowledging his sovereignty over their respective states. A. D. 1072.

In his incursion into Ulster he appears to have been not equally successful, having returned from thence without hostages or plunder, and with the loss, it is added, of a part of his army. He succeeded soon after, however, in dethroning Godfred, king of the Dublin Danes, and, having banished him beyond seas, appointed his own son, Murkertach, to be king over that people.¶ From the frequent intermarriage** that took place between these foreigners and the natives, the decendants of the original Northmen had become, at this period, a mixed race; and accordingly, early in the present century, we find the inhabitants of Dublin called by Tigernach Gall-Gedel, or Dano-Irish.††

The reduction, indeed, of the Danes of Dublin, the last remaining hold of the Northmen's power, had, to a great extent, been effected some years before the period where we have now arrived,‡‡ and, in the person of Murchad, the son of the gallant Dermot, was witnessed the first Irish king of the Danes. In the year 1070, this prince died;§§ and, after an interval of a few years, during which the Northmen appear to have recovered the dominion of that city, the monarch Turlough, as we have just seen, expelled the prince of their choice, and appointed his own son Murkertach in his place.

To dwell in detail on the remaining events of this prince's reign, would be but to repeat, and with little variation even of phrase, the same meager accounts of pitched battles, predatory inroads, and exactions of tribute, which form the sole material of history throughout the greater part of these monarchs' reigns. Though unsuccessful, at first, in Ulster, he at length compelled that province also to acknowledge vassalage, as well as every other part of the kingdom, and received from Eochad, king of Ulster, as his tribute, 1000 head of cattle, 40 ounces of gold, and 120 party-coloured mantles.‖‖ It is mentioned, to the honour of our Irish oak, though with what truth there are not any means of ascer-

* "Tordelachum autem Thadei filium, B. Boïumhii nepotem, nemo in regum Hiberniæ numero non collocat."—*Gratianus Lucius.*

† Thus O'Halloran:—"On his (Dermot's) death, Turlough certainly was the most potent prince in Ireland, and had the fairest claim to the title of nominal monarch."—Vol. iii. c. 3.

‡ "Dermitium Maken-Anel, dignissimum et optimum principem qui unquam in Hibernia regnavit." This chronicler assigns his death to about 1068; but Tigernach, the Annals of Inisfallen, and the Four Masters, place it at 1072.

§ Tigernach and IV. Mag.

‖ Inisfall. ad an. 1073. ¶ Ibid. 1075.

** One of the most distinguished instances of this sort of intermarriage is found in the family of the great Brian Boru, whose third wife had, previously to her marriage with him, been the wife of a Danish prince; and was, by this double union, mother to Sitric, King of Dublin, as well as to the Irish monarch, Donchad. See Tigernach, ad an. 1030, the year in which this princess died.

†† Ad an. 1034.

‡‡ This decided advantage over the remaining power of the Dublin Danes may be dated from the year 1029, when Aulaf, son of Sitric, then King of the Danes, was made prisoner by O'Regan, Prince of Bregia, and forced to redeem himself at an enormous sacrifice both of wealth and of power. Annal. Ult. ad an. 1029.

§§ IV. Mag. ad ann. 1070. These annals call him prince of the Gals (or Strangers,) and of the Lagenians.

‖‖ Inisfall. ad an. 1082.

taining, that a short time before Turlough's death, William Rufus, who was then on the throne of England, sent to request that he would furnish him with timber from the Irish forests for the roof of the palace he was then erecting at Westminster.*

After a severe and lingering illness, brought on by a fright, attended with circumstances so marvellous, that it would not be easy to detail them with due historic gravity,† Turlough, whose sway was acknowledged through the greater part of Ireland, died at Kincora, the royal palace of the O'Brians, in the month of July, 1086, in the 77th year of his age, and the 22d of his reign. Of this prince, as well as of most of the other pretenders to the monarchy, our means of knowledge are far too scanty and uncertain to admit of our forming, even conjecturally, any estimate of his character. Those lights and openings by which the historian gains an insight into royal councils, are of course not to be looked for in such times; but even of ordinary public events, there occurs, with the exception always of battles and deaths, so rare a sprinkling throughout our annals, that the reign of Turlough, for instance, which extended through a period of two and twenty years, supplies not a fact from which the character of the man himself can be judged, or a single glimpse into the interior of his domestic life obtained.

In this dearth of all native testimony on such points, there is extant a foreign tribute to his character, in no ordinary degree flattering, being a letter addressed to him personally by the learned Lanfranc,‡ then archbishop of Canterbury, wherein some charges brought by that prelate against the church of Ireland, accusing it of laxity of discipline, and uncanonical practices, are prefaced by expressions of the warmest eulogy upon the monarch Turlough himself. "That God was mercifully disposed towards the people of Ireland," says the archbishop, "when he gave to your excellency royal power over that land, every intelligent observer must perceive. For, so much hath my brother and fellow-bishop Patrick reported to me, concerning your pious humility towards the good, your severe justice on the wicked, and the discreet equity of your dealings with all mankind, that, though it has never been my good fortune to see you, I yet love you as if I had."

This letter of Lanfranc is addressed "To the magnificent king of Hibernia, Tirdelvac;" and though, at home, Turlough's claim to the title of monarch was in some quarters opposed, the fact of its recognition in other countries may be concluded, not only from this letter of the English primate, but also from another addressed to him, a few years after, by Gregory VII.,§ in which he is styled, "The illustrious king of Ireland." There is yet a farther tribute to his rank and fame to be found in the deputation sent to him from the nobles of Man and the other Isles, requesting that he would send them some member of his family to be their ruler until the young heir of the crown of Man should come of age. Turlough complied, it is added, with their request, and sent a prince of the blood-royal of Ireland, to be their regent.‖ As a slight, but additional proof of his rank in Ireland having been known and recognised in other countries, we find mention of the arrival of five Jews, from some part of the continent, bearing

* Hanmer:—"The fair green, or Commune (says Hanmer,) now called Ostmontowne Greene, was all wood, and hee that diggeth at this day to any depth, shall finde the ground full of great rootes. From thence, anno 1098, King William Rufus, by license of Murchard, had that frame which made up the roofe of Westminster Hall, where no English spider webbeth or breedeth to this day."—*Chronicle of Ireland.*

† It appears that, some years before (1073,) when Connor O'Melachlan, King of Meath, had been murdered, the monarch, Turlough, who had borne this prince a most deadly aversion, carried off forcibly the head of his corpse from the abbey of Clonmacnois on a Good Friday, and had it buried near his own palace of Kincora. On the following Sunday, however, "through a miracle, as we are told, of God and St. Ciaran," the head was found again in its tomb at Clonmacnois, with two collars of gold around the neck. But the chief cause of the monarch's alarm was, that, on his taking up the skull in his hand to examine it, there jumped a small mouse suddenly out of it into his bosom. Of the fright this incident gave him, he never after, say the Four Masters, recovered.

‡ *Vet. Epist. Hibernic. Sylloge.* Ep. 28. What Lanfranc complains of in this letter is, 1. That in Turlough's kingdom men quit, without any canonical cause, their rightful wives, and take others, without any regard to the prohibited degrees of consanguinity; marrying sometimes even women that had been in like manner deserted by their husbands. 2. That bishops were consecrated by one bishop. 3. That infants were baptised without consecrated chrism. 4. That holy orders were given by bishops for money. Of these charges, the first and fourth are the only ones of real importance; the two others relating but to points of discipline, and admitting easily of explanation and defence, as the reader will find on referring to Lanigan, *Eccles. Hist.* c. xxiv. § 12.

§ *Sylloge*, Epist. 29. Thus headed:—"Gregorius Episcopus, servus servorum Dei; Terdelvacho inclyto Regi Hiberniæ, Archiepiscopis, episcopis," &c. "This letter is much in the style (says Dr. Lanigan) of several others which Gregory wrote to various kings, princes, &c., for the purpose of claiming not only a spiritual, but likewise a temporal and political superiority over all the kingdoms and principalities of Europe."—Lanigan, *Eccles. Hist.* c. xxiv. § 14. The pope more than insinuates, in this letter, his double claim over Ireland; and concludes by saying,—"Si qua vero negotia penes vos emerserint, quæ nostro digna videantur auxilio, incunctanter ad nos dirigere studete: et quod juste postulaveritis, deo auxiliante, impetrabis."

‖ Chronic. Mannie, ad an. 1075. This application is stated by the chronicler to have been addressed to Murkertach, the successor of Turlough; but the date alone proves the event to have occurred during the reign of this latter prince.

valuable presents for Turlough, as the reigning king of the country. From some repugnance, however, on the part of the monarch, to an offering of gifts from such hands, these Jews, with their presents, were, by his order, dismissed from the kingdom.*

The hospitality, however, of the nation to strangers was, more than once, experienced in the course of his reign, by some fugitive Welsh princes who sought for refuge on these shores. One of these, Gryffyth ap Conan, was, by the aid of the princes of Ulster, restored to his dominions; and there seems to break upon us, in the midst of all this gloom and barbarism, a refreshing gleam of civilized life, when informed that Gryffyth, on his return to Wales, was accompanied, by a number of Irish bards and harpers, whom he had selected for the purpose of improving the taste of his countrymen in music.†

CHAPTER XXIV.

Munster divided between the three sons of Turlough.—Contest between Murkertach and Dermod for that throne.—Dermod assisted by O'Lochlin, prince of Alichia.—O'Lochlin competitor with Murkertach for the sovereignty.—Interposition of the ecclesiastical authorities.—Grant of the city of Cashel to the church.—Invasion of Ulster.—Destruction of the palace of the princes of Alichia.—Ireland threatened with invasion by Godred Crovan. —Descent of Magnus on her shores.—Marriage of his son with Murkertach's daughter.— Defeat and death of Magnus.—Arnulf de Montgomery assisted by Murkertach in his rebellion against Henry I.—Marries a daughter of Murkertach.—Attack and defeat of O'Lochlin‡ —Death of Murkertach.—Affairs of the church.—Bishops of the Danish sees in Ireland consecrated by the archbishop of Canterbury.—Correspondence of the Irish kings with the two prelates, Lanfranc and Anselm.—St. Bernard's gloomy picture of the state of Ireland. —Synod held at Fiodh-Ængusa.—Synod of Rath-Breasail for the regulation of the Dioceses.

On the death of Turlough, the kingdom of Munster was divided equally between his three sons, Teige, Murkertach, and Dermot. But, in the course of the same year, the eldest, Teige, having died "in the bed," says the chronicler, "of his father,‡ at Kincora," Murkertach banished his brother Dermot into Connaught, and took sole possession of the throne.§ Between these two brothers some years of fierce and obstinate contention ensued; the younger, Dermot, being aided in the struggle by the kings of the other three provinces, whom Murkertach's pretensions to the supreme sovereignty had provoked thus to coalesce against him. Among these opponents of the new king of Munster, by far the most formidable in strength of title as well as of sword, was Domnal M'Lochlin, prince of Alichia, the acknowledged head of the royal Hy-Niell line, and therefore entitled, by a right transmitted through a long race of monarchs. In opposition to this plea of prescription, Murkertach stood forward on the grounds of the new constitution or order of things, by which a right so long, and, as he maintained, unjustly withheld, had been thrown open to the provincial princes. A. D. 1086.

Whatever was the weight in reality attached, by either of these contending parties to the important principles involved in their respective claims, the field of battle was, as usual, the tribunal to which both resorted eagerly for the decision of them. Under the pretence of assisting Dermot to recover his hereditary rights, M'Lochlin, chief of the Hy-Niells, took the field, in the year 1088, and, joined by the troops of the king of Connaught, whom he had compelled to render him homage, invaded Munster with their united force. The burning of Limerick, the spoliation and waste of the fertile plain of Munster, "as far," it is stated, "as Imleach-Ibar, the castle of Ached and Loch A. D. 1088.

* Inisfall. ad an. 1078.

† "Even so late as the eleventh century the practice continued among the Welsh bards, of receiving instruction in the bardic profession from Ireland. In 1078, Gryffyth ap Conan brought over with him from Ireland many Irish bards for the information and improvement of the Welsh."—*Warton's History of English Poetry.*

‡ Inisfall. (Cod. Bodleian.) ad an. 1069 (ære com. 1086.) § Ibid.

Gar,"* and finally the utter destruction of Kincora,† the palace of the Mononian kings, were among the first and chief results of this invasion. Nor was Murkertach slow in retaliating the aggression; but, sailing with a numerous fleet of boats up the Shannon, he proceeded, in wanton imitation of the heathen warfare of the Danes, to despoil all the churches upon the isles and along the shores of the lakes.‡ Then, carrying his arms also into Leinster, and making himself master of that province and of Dublin, he, for the second time, supplanted Godfred in the government of the city, and, compelling him to fly from the kingdom, took upon himself the joint sovereignty of Leinster and Dublin.

As it soon became manifest that, between two such active competitors, so nearly balanced in territorial power, military talents, and resources, there was but little chance of a speedy termination of the contest, measures were taken for an amicable arrangement of their differences, and a convention was held by them on the banks of Lough Neagh,§ near a spot venerable as the site of an ancient Druidic monument, where the two princes, pledging themselves by most solemn oaths "upon the relics of the saints of Erin," and "by the crosier of St. Patrick," agreed to divide the kingdom of Ireland between them;—the southern half, or Leath Mogh, to remain under the dominion of Murkertach, and the northern, or Leath Cuinn, to be subject to the power of O'Lochlin. Besides the two contracting parties themselves, there were also present at this meeting Maoleachlan, prince of Meath, and Roderic O'Connor, king of Connaught; and it is stated, as bearing on the question of supremacy, then at issue, that to O'Lochlin all the other princes present, including Murkertach himself, delivered hostages in token of fealty and submission.‖ Whatever conclusions, however, may have been drawn from this homage, as recognising in the blood of the Tyrone Hy-Niells a paramount claim to the sovereignty, will be found to be neutralized by a similar concession, on the part of O'Lochlin, in the course of the very same year, when the two rivals, notwithstanding their late solemn pledges of peace, having come again into collision, the fiat of fortune was pronounced in favour of Murkertach, and the head of the Hy-Niells was forced, in his turn, to proffer fealty and deliver hostages.¶

A. D. 1090.

Not to pursue any farther the details, as monotonous as they are revolting, of the long and fierce struggle between these ambitious rivals, suffice it to say that the contest was continued by them, with equal fury and the like ebb and flow of success, through the next eight and twenty years; and that while they, in their more exalted regions of power, were thus dealing havoc around them, all the minor dynasts of the land each in his own little orbit of misrule, was pursuing a similar career of discord and devastation, making the whole course of affairs throughout the country one constant succession of blood and rapine, such as, even in the dry, uncoloured records of the annalist, it is sufficiently heart-sickening to contemplate;—if, indeed, the recital be not rendered more shocking by that tone of cool and official statement, in which such horrors are, as mere matters of course, commemorated and chronicled.

In the midst of this constant storm of warfare, the Church, though herself but too much infected with the same combative spirit, presented also, from time to time, the only check, or breakwater, by which the onset of regal violence could be moderated or turned aside. One of the occasions of this sort of interference occurred in the year 1099, when Murkertach, having with a large and threatening force marched into Ulster, was met, near the mountain Fuad, by the Hy-Niell, at the head of his Ultonians, and the two armies, front to front, were waiting for the signal to engage, when the primate of Armagh, interposing between them, succeeded by his remonstrances in preventing an appeal to arms.** In several other instances where these two kings were, in like manner, on the point of commencing a combat, the meditation of the vicar of St. Patrick produced the same calming effects; and the truces concluded on such occasions were in general intended to continue in force for a year.

A. D. 1099.

There can be little doubt that the temporal power attained by the Church, in the

* IV. Mag. ad an 1088.

† The name of this celebrated palace, or fortress, is spelled indifferently Kincora, Ceancora, or Cancora, and its site is thus described by Seward, *Topograph Hibern.* "*Cancora*, a rath or castle, near Killaloe, in county Clare, province of Munster. The only remains now visible of this ancient royal palace are the ramparts and fosse of the rath."

‡ Mag. ad an. 1089.

§ Inisfall. (Cod. Bodleian.) ad an 1074 (æræ com. 1090.)

‖ IV. Mag. 1090. "En itaque (says Dr. O'Connor) dominium O'Niallorum Septentrionalum, i. e. Tironensium, de tota Hibernia jure hereditario à principibus Hibernis recognitum seculo ximo," &c. In the very next page to this boast of the supremacy of the Hy-Niells is recorded the submission of the Hy-Niells to the blood of Brian in their turn.

¶ IV Mag. 1090.

** IV. Mag. ad an. 1099.

middle ages, conduced, by the check which it opposed to the encroachments of kings, to advance considerably the cause of civil and political liberty.* But in Ireland, where, owing to the disorder that had so long prevailed as well as to the decline of discipline and dignity in the Church itself, the power of the spiritual arm was far less strong than in most other countries of Europe, this useful barrier against the self-willed violence of kings and dynasts was in a great measure wanting. Frequently, indeed, even those public and solemn oaths by which, under the very eyes of their spiritual directors, these warriors pledged themselves to preserve peace towards each other, were, on the first opportunity of conflict, forgotten and violated.

It will be found that most of the great impulses given to the course of human affairs, whether for good or for evil, have been the direct consequences of reaction; and the usurpation, in those times, of temporal dominion by ecclesiastics, was but a counter-abuse to that of the numerous lay princes and nobles who had been so long intruding themselves into the possessions and privileges of the Church. To such an extent did this latter abuse prevail in Ireland that the bishopric of Armagh, the great primatial see of the kingdom, was for no less than two hundred years in the possession of one powerful family; during a great part of which period, the succession passed through the hands of lay usurpers, who, retaining regular bishops to act for them, as suffragans, continued to enjoy the church livings themselves. Thus, while the clergy of other countries were ambitiously extending the range of their jurisdiction, and aiming at honours and possessions beyond their due sphere, those of Ireland, on the contrary, lowered from their true station, found themselves despoiled of emoluments and dignities legitimately their own; nor was it till so late as the twelfth century that, chiefly, as it appears, through the indignant expostulation of a foreign ecclesiastic,† attention was drawn to this gross abuse, and the succession to the see of St. Patrick was brought back into a pure and legitimate channel.

That notwithstanding all this, there, must still have been preserved among the people of this country—a people once so conspicuous throughout Europe for their piety—a strong and pervading religious feeling, however imbued with the general darkness of the times, and allowed to run wild for want of culture and discipline, is sufficiently apparent on the very face of our native annals, even in this dim and agitated period. The number of pious and, according to the standard of their age, learned ecclesiastics who are recorded in the annals of the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries as passing their whole lives in works of devotion and charity, among the ruins of once flourishing monasteries, could not but cherish, in the popular mind, a fond remembrance of the early saints of the land, and keep alive, like the small spark beneath the embers, some remains of the faith of better days.

It is also to be considered that, though but too many of the native princes were seen to tread in the steps of their heathen invaders, and, with far worse than heathen rage, to apply the torch to the temples of their own worship, there were among the monarchs a few who, towards the close of their tempestuous careers, sought, in the humble garb of penitents, the sheltering bosom of the Church. Among the warmest promoters of ecclesiastical interests was reckoned the monarch Murkertach, who, in the year 1001, having convoked a great assembly of the people and clergy, made over by solemn donation to the Church, that seat of the Momonian kings, the city of Cashel, dedicating it to God and St. Patrick.‡

Soon after this munificent act of piety,—"such an offering," say the Four Masters, "as never king made before,"—we find him, with the inconsistency but too often observable in the acts of such pious heroes, taking revenge, in cold blood, upon his great rival, O' Lochlin, for the destruction of Kincora by the latter near twenty years before. Invading Ulster with a large force, and leading his troops into the peninsula of Inisowen, where stood the palace of the royal Hy-Niells, called Aileach, or the Eagle's Nest,§ he, in bitter remembrance of the fate of Kincora, razed that structure to the ground, and devastated also the greater number of the churches in its neighbourhood. It is added that he

* See, for some admirable remarks to this effect, an able article in the Edinburgh Review, No. 52. "On the Constitution of Parliament," written, it is generally supposed by Mr. Allen.

† St. Bernard.

‡ Inisfall. ad ann. 1001.

§ This celebrated fortress, of which remains are still existing, was situated in the county of Donegal on the summit of a small mountain which rises from the southern shore of Lough Swilly. A detailed description of this remarkable historical monument, which still bears the name of the Grianan of Aileach, will be found in the *Ordnance Survey of the County of Londonderry*. The result of the inquiries of the ingenious author of the account referred to is as follows:—"Be this as it may, the notices of Aileach preserved in the authentic annals, and historical poems, as well as the Lives of Saints and genealogical tracts, show that it was the seat of the kings of the northern portion of Ireland, as Tara was of the southern, from a period considerably antecedent to the introduction of Christianity down to the close of the 12th century."

gave orders to his soldiers not to leave in the palace of Ailech a single missile stone, but to carry them all away to Limerick; in reference to which circumstance a distich of those times is cited, saying, "Let not the Congregations of Saints hear what has reached the ears of the Congregations of Warriors,—that all the stones of Alichia were heaped on the packhorses of the angry king."

During the period comprised in the reigns of Murkertach and his predecessor, Turlough, Ireland was more than once threatened with invasion from the shores of Norway and the Isles, and under leaders whose fame for prowess had inspired a general terror of their arms. One of these chiefs, named Godred Crovan, said to have been the son of Harold the Black, of Iceland,* succeeded in possessing himself of Dublin and a great part of Leinster; having also previously reduced so low the naval power of the British Scots, that no shipbuilder among them durst use more than three bolts in the construction of any vessel.† It seems probable, however, that this Northman's possession of his conquests in Ireland was but temporary, and that the notion of his having reigned for sixteen years in Dublin, arose from a confusion between him and a Danish ruler of Dublin, named Godfred, who died in the year 1075.

The other assailant, by whom for a time this country's independence seemed to be threatened, was the powerful Norwegian king, Magnus, who was also ruler over the Hebrides and the Isle of Man; and as may be collected from Scandinavian as well as from Irish authorities, entertained seriously the project of adding Ireland also to the number of his conquests.‡ The marriage of his son, Sigurd, whom he had then newly appointed king over the Isles, with the daughter of the Irish monarch, Murkertach, formed, as it appears, a part of the policy by which he hoped to effect his object; and this event, according to the northern chroniclers, took place some time in the years 1098 and 1099, while the Norwegian king was wintering in the Western Isles. According to our own annals, however, it was not till A. D. 1102, that this prince commenced his operations by a hostile descent upon Dublin, where he was met,§ on his landing, by a large army of the natives; but no action thereupon ensuing, a pacific arrangement was forthwith entered into, in consequence of which Murkertach bestowed his daughter's hand on the son of Magnus, presenting him, at the same time, with many rare and costly gifts. In the following year, the Irish monarch having violated, as we are told, his engagements,‖ Magnus, with a fleet of fifteen ships, invaded this country; but being, with a part of his force, inveigled into an ambuscade, by the natives, he was attacked by them in great numbers, his retreat to his ships cut off, and himself killed in the action. This invader was buried, says the chronicler of Man, in the church of St. Patrick, at Down.

The desire manifested by the king of Norway for an alliance by marriage with the family of Murkertach, is not the only proof we possess of the consideration in which this monarch was held by contemporary princes. Not to dwell on the alleged application to him from the nobles of Man, requesting him to send them some member of his family to be their ruler,—an occurrence which in reality, as we have shown, took place in the reign of his predecessor, Turlough,—it is certain that, at the time of the rebellion against Henry the I. by Robert de Belesme, earl of Shrewsbury, that nobleman's brother, Arnulf de Montgomery, who was then in Wales collecting forces, despatched an envoy to king Murkertach, to solicit the hand of his daughter in marriage.¶ By such a request was generally understood, in those times, a desire for military as well as matrimonial alliance; and Arnulf himself is said by the Welsh chroniclers to have passed over to Ireland, for the purpose of receiving both the hand of the lady, and the aids and supplies for the

* *Chronic. Man.* ad ann. 1047. Langebek proposes to read here "Harold the Black of Ireland," conceiving Godfred to have been an Irish Dane descended from that Anlaf who was defeated by Athelstane, at the battle of Brunanburgh.—See his *Schema Agnationis* to this effect. As a farther confirmation of this supposition, he finds in the name Crovan a similitude to many of our Irish names. "Ad hæc cognomen Crovan idiotismum Hibernicæ prodere videtur; ibi enim homines cognominatos Conellan, Callean, Brogan, &c. invenimus."

† By Selden, in his *Mare Clausum*, this law, respecting the construction of the vessels, is explained, as merely signifying that Crovan, by his dominion over those seas, had confined within certain limits the naval power of the Scots. A similar explanation of the passage has been given by the learned Murray of Gottengen.—*Nov. Comment. Gotting.*, tom. iii. p 2.

‡ "Ann. ab Incarnat. Dom. 1098. Magnus Olavi Noricorum regis filius contra Irenses insurrexit et classem LX navium, supra illos navigaturus, præparavit..... Hic filiam regis Irlandæ uxorem duxerat. Sed quia rex Irensis pactiones quas fecerat non tenuerat, Magnus rex stomachatus filiam ejus remiserat. Bellum igitur inter eos ortum est."—*Orderic. Vital.* The chronicler here, as Langebek remarks, has mistakenly made Magnus himself the husband of the Irish princess instead of his son Sigurd. The Welsh chronicler, Caradoc, is more accurate. "Magnus," he says, "returning to the Isle of Man, which he had got by conquest, built there three castles, and then sent to Ireland to have the daughter of Murckart to his son, which being obtained, he created him King of Man."—*Ad ann.* 1100.

§ IV. Mag. ad ann. 1102.

‖ Chron. Man.

¶ "Arnulph, Earl of Pembroke, sent Gerald, his steward, to Murckhart, King of Ireland, desiring his daughter in marriage, which was easily granted."—*Caradoc*, ad ann. 1100.

rebellion, furnished by her father. Such aid, afforded by Murkertach to the rebel subjects of Henry I., would seem inconsistent with the feelings of devotedness towards that monarch, which William of Malmesbury attributes to the Irish king.* This historian owns, it is true, that Murkertach assumed, for a short time, a tone of defiance against the English; but adds that, when threatened with restraints upon his commerce and navigation, he returned to his former state of composure: "For what," says the monk of Malmesbury, "could Ireland do, if the merchandise of England were not carried to her shores?"—a proof that the intercourse between the two countries, before the time of the English invasion, was far more frequent and habitual than is in general supposed.

Among the circumstances adduced to prove the friendly terms on which he stood with neighbouring princes is especially recorded the gift of a camel "of wonderful magnitude," which he received from the King of Albany.†

A few years after, in a desperate encounter with his rival, Mac-Lochlin, on the plains of Cobha, in Tyrone, Murkertach sustained a severe defeat, from which he seems never after to have entirely recovered;†—his own imprudence, in detaching a portion of his army to lay waste and reduce the territory then called Dalaradia, having so far diminished and divided his force as to enable the enemy to reap an easy triumph. The victorious return of the northern Hy-Neills to their royal fortress, carrying away with them the royal pavilion and standards, the stores of pearls and other precious treasures, of which they had despoiled the Momonians, is dwelt on with more than usual detail by the annalists of Ulster, and the Four Masters; while in the Annals of Inisfallen, the accustomed partiality to the cause of Munster is allowed to prevail, and the rich display of spoils by her conquerors is passed over in sullen silence. A. D. 1103.

For several years after this great victory, no event of any importance is recorded of Murkertach or his rival. From time to time we find the interposition of the spiritual authority called in to prevent them from breaking out into actual hostilities;§ and, on more than one occasion, the pious and able Archbishop Celsus succeeded in averting a conflict between them when brought face to face, at the head of their respective armies, in the field.

In the year 1114, Murkertach was seized with an attack of illness so violent as to incapacitate him, for the time, from managing, in person, the affairs of his kingdom;‖ and a chance of succession was thus opened to his ambitious brother, Dermot, of which that prince eagerly took advantage, and had himself proclaimed king of Munster. In the following year, however, an amicable understanding appears to have been entered into by the two brothers; and the monarch, finding his malady continue, and being desirous of passing the remainder of his days in seclusion and devotion, resigned the royal authority into Dermot's hands, and took holy orders in the monastery of Lismore. There, after two or three years of humbling penitence, he died A. D. 1119, and was interred in the church of Killaloe, to which he had been always a munificent benefactor. His warlike competitor in the government of the kingdom, Domnal Mac Lochlin, survived him but two years, devoting also his last days to devotion and penitence in the monastery of Derry.

The affairs and transactions of the Church during the long period comprised in this double reign, though as usual mixed up, as they actually occurred, with most of the secular interests and passions of the time, I have thought it convenient, for the sake of clearness, to reserve for separate consideration. It has been seen that though, at this period, the Northmen inhabiting the three cities of Dublin, Waterford, and Limerick, looked to Canterbury as their primatial see, and derived from thence the consecration of their bishops, the ancient Church of the kingdom acknowledged no such jurisdiction; and that though, in some few instances, Irishmen were consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury, they were, in all such cases, natives who had been appointed bishops by the Danes, and whose dioceses were situated in Danish cities.¶

* "Eum (Murkertach) et successores ejus quos fama non extulit, ita devotos habuit noster Henricus, ut nihil nisi quod eum palparet scriberent, nihil nisi quod juberent, agerent. Quamvis feratur Murchardam, nescio qua de causa, paucis diebus inflatius in Anglos egisse; sed mox pro interdicto navigio et mercimonio navigantium, tumorem pectoris sedasse—Quantum enim valeret Hibernia, si non adnavigaret merces ex Anglia?—*Gul. Malmesb. de Reg. Angl.*, lib. v.

† "Amicitiam quoque cum Albaniæ rege coluit a quo camelum 'miræ magnitudinis' dono recepit."—*Gratian. Lucius.*

‡ IV. Mag. ad ann. 1103.

§ Once in 1109 (IV. Mag.,) and twice in the course of 1113. Ib.

‖ "That illness of the king," says the annalist (Inisfall.,) "was the cause of many and great calamities, of battles and deeds of guilt, of devastations and massacres, of violations of churches and of the sanctuaries of the saints of Erin; and all these evils continued as long as that malady of the King of Erin lasted."

¶ In remarking on an assertion of Campion, that persons appointed to sees in Ireland were always directed to the Archbishop of Canterbury to be consecrated by him, Usher shows that such was not the case with the bishops of all Ireland; this practice being peculiar, he says, "to the Ostman strangers that possessed the

That the distinguished prelates, Lanfranc and Anselm, who held in succession the see of Canterbury during this period, took a strong interest in the ecclesiastical affairs of Ireland, appears from their correspondence, still extant, with some bishops of their own ordination in this country, as well as with two of its most able and enterprising sovereigns, Turlough and Murkertach.* In a letter from Lanfranc to the former of these princes, of which some notice has already been taken, complaints are made of the prevalence, in Ireland, of certain abuses and uncanonical practices, some of them relating merely to points of discipline, but others more serious in their consequences, as affecting the purity and strictness of the matrimonial tie. For the purpose of correcting these abuses, the primate recommended to Turlough, that an assembly "of bishops and religious men should be convoked, at which the king and his nobles would attend, and assist in exterminating from the country these and all other bad practices which were condemned by the sacred laws of the Church."†

It has been well remarked that the tone of this letter is wholly inconsistent with the notion assumed by some writers, of a jurisdiction vested in the see of Canterbury over the concerns of the Irish church;‡ as here, on points relating not merely to discipline, but affecting Christian morals, and in which, therefore, the primate was more than ordinarily interested, he uses no language that in any degree savours of authority, nor issues any orders to the Irish bishops and clergy (as would have been his duty, had he conceived that he possessed the power) to assemble and act upon an occasion which appeared to him of such great and pressing importance.

In the course of a short time, the two other Danish cities, Waterford and Limerick, became also episcopal sees: and the first bishop of the former city, whose name was Malchus,§ was chosen (as appears from the Letter of the electors to Anselm) by the following personages,—the King Murkertach, the Bishop of Cashel, Bishop Domnald, and the Prince Dermod, or "duke," as he is styled, brother of the king. Notwithstanding that Murkertach, as ruler of the south of Ireland, included Waterford among his subject territories, the wish of the Danish inhabitants of this city to be connected, in spirituals, with the Normans of England, was, in the case of Dublin, complied with; the king himself, as has just been stated, joining the clergy and inhabitants in the letter addressed on this occasion to Anselm, requesting him to consecrate their new bishop.

To this practice, followed by the Danish towns, of requiring ordination from Canterbury, the city of Limerick presents an exception, in the instance of its first bishop, Gillibert;—this zealous prelate, who appears to have been an Irishman,‖ having been already a bishop when placed over Limerick. From letters, still extant, which passed between him and Anselm, we learn that they had been acquainted with each other at Rouen;¶ and Gillibert, in writing to the archbishop, says, "I send you as a little token, both of my poverty and affection, twenty-five small pearls,** the best, though worthless, that I

three cities of Dublin, Waterford, and Limerick. For these being a colony (continues Usher) of the Norwegians and Livonians, and so countrymen to the Normans, when they had seen England subdued by the Conqueror, and Normans advanced to the chief archbishopric there, would needs now assume to themselves the name of Normans also, and cause their bishops to receive their consecrations from no other metropolitan but the Archbishop of Canterbury; and forasmuch as they were confined within the walls of their own cities, the bishops which they had made had no other diocese to exercise their jurisdiction in, but only the bare circuit of those cities."—*Discourse on the Religion*, &c. &c. What is said here of Normans being advanced to the chief archbishoprics is not altogether true,—both Lanfranc and Anselm having been natives of Italy.

* In Murkertach's answer to Anselm (*Sylloge.*, epist. 37,) he returns his best thanks to that prelate for remembering in his prayers a sinner like himself, and likewise for the friendly aid and intervention, which (as far as was consistent with his high dignity) he had afforded to Murkertach's son-in-law, Arnulf de Montgomery.—"Quam magnas vobis grates (Domine) referre debeo; quod, sicut mihi relatum est, memoriam mei peccatoris in continuis vestris peragis orationibus; sed et genero meo Ernulfo auxilio et interventione (quantum fuerat dignitati vestræ fas) succurristi."

† "Episcopos et religiosos quoseque viros in unum convenire jubete, sacro eorum conventui præsentiam vestram cum vestris optimatibus exhibete, has pravas consuetudine omneque alias quæ a sacris legibus improbantur, a regno vestro exterminare studete."—*Vet. Epist. Hib. Sylloge*, Epist. 27.

‡ Camden is one of the writers by whom this mistaken notion is sanctioned:—"Before this period," he says (meaning before the year 1142,) "the bishops of Ireland were always consecrated by the archbishops of Canterbury, by reason of their primacy in that kingdom." He then enumerates instances of such consecration, which, however, are all confined to the Danish cities.

§ On the return of Malchus from England, after his consecration, he and the Danes of Waterford built the Cathedral of the Blessed Trinity, now called Christ Church.—"See Smith's *Hist. of Waterford*, chap. 4.

‖ Lanigan, chap. 25. § 9. A tract written by Gillibert, called "De Statu Ecclesiæ," and giving an account of a painted image of the Church which he had made, will be found in Usher's *Sylloge*, ep. 30. Among the various utensils for the service of the church, which, according to the rules laid down in this treatise, were to be consecrated by the bishop, is mentioned the *Judicial Iron*, an instrument of purgation, or trial, the use of which was common among the Saxons and Danes, and most probably, from this mention of it by Gillibert, prevailed also in Ireland. Ib. ep. 31.

¶ "Quoniam autem olim nos apud Rothomagum invicem cognovimus."—*Sylloge*. ep. 32.

** "Munusculum paupertatis meæ et devotionis transmitto, xxv. margaritulas inter optimas et viliores; et rogo ne sitis immemor mei in orationibus vestris."—Of the pearls found in the lake of Killarney, a writer in the *Philosophical Transact.* (vol. xviii.) says:—"I myself saw one pearl bought for 50*s*. that was valued at 40*l*.

could procure, and I entreat of you not to be unmindful of me in your prayers." The archbishop, in his answer to this letter, without pointing out the particular abuses of which he complains, intimates generally a no less unfavourable opinion of the Irish church than had been expressed by his predecessor, Lanfranc; and presses earnestly on his brother prelate, the duty of correcting, as far as lay in his power, so grievous a state of things, by implanting morals and good doctrines among the people over whom he spiritually presides.

But by far the most gloomy picture drawn of the state of religion and morals in Ireland at this time, is that which remains to us from the pen of the celebrated St. Bernard,—an effusion, which, together with the fervid and impetuous zeal that marked his whole life and writings, betrays also no small portion of the spirit of exaggeration and over-statement which naturally belongs to such a temperament.* The marriage of the clergy, and the intrusion of laymen into ecclesiastical property,—the two great scandals that then drew down the fulminations of popes and councils—were the chief irregularities that provoked the anger of St. Bernard against Ireland; and in the known and flagrant fact of so many married laymen having usurped the rank and prerogatives of the archbishop of Armagh, the saint found, it must be owned, a subject highly deserving of his most stern and denunciatory censure.

Of the fidelity, however, of his general picture of the state of Ireland, there appear good reasons for feeling distrustful. Having never himself been in the country, and deriving his sole information from natives, on the spot—a source of intelligence, too apt, in all times, to be imbittered by local and factious prejudices—he was led to generalize upon particular cases, not always in themselves authentic, and thus to present, on the whole, a false, or at least exaggerated, representation. Learning, for instance, that in the diocese of Connor—a place to which, from the nature of the task he was employed upon,† his inquiries were chiefly directed—there prevailed a frightful degree of immorality and barbarism, this vehement censor extends the charge at once to the whole kingdom; and, from ignorance of the peculiar forms observed in the marriages of the Irish, imputes to them, among other irregularities, that "they did not enter into lawful wedlock." This charge, followed up by what Giraldus alleged at a later period, namely, that the natives "did not yet contract marriage," has furnished grounds for accusing the Irish of those times of having lived in a state of almost universal concubinage; whereas, in both instances, the meaning of a charge so ambiguously worded was not that the Irish dispensed with the ceremony of marriage altogether, but that they did not contract it in that particular form which the English and some other nations considered alone to be lawful.‡

There was, doubtless, then, as there has been unfortunately at most periods of our history, quite enough in the real condition of the country to mourn over and condemn, without calling in also the hand of calumny to add new shadows to the picture.

Of the ecclesiastical transactions of the reign of Murkertach, one of the most remarkable—his dedication of the royal city of Cashel to the uses of the Church—has already been mentioned. In the year 1111 a great synod, of which neither the objects or acts are clearly specified, was held at Fiodh-Ængusa, or Ængus's Grove, a place in the neighbourhood of the famed hill of Usneach, where, of old, the Druids held their rites. At this convention, besides Murkertach and the nobles of his kingdom, there attended also Moelmurry, Archbishop of Cashel—this see having been lately elevated to archiepiscopal rank—50 other bishops, 300 priests, and 3,000 persons of the clerical order. Shortly after this national meeting, there was held another great synod at Rath-Breasail,§ presided over by Gillibert, Bishop of Limerick, who was then apostolic legate in Ireland, and the first, it appears, appointed to that high office. By this synod a regular division

A miller took out a pearl which he sold for 10*l.* to one who sold it to the late Lady Glenanly for 30*l.* with whom I saw it in a necklace. She refused 80*l.* for it from the late Duchess of Ormond."

* As is said by a French author, who truly edited the writings of one of his victims, Abelard, "he spared nobody,"—nec enim ulli pepercit.—See Bayle, art. *St. Bernard.*

† He was then writing his Life of St. Malachy. The following is a specimen of his account of the state of Connor:—"Tunc intellexit homo Dei non ad homines se sed ad bestias destinatum. Nusquam adhuc tales expertus fuerat in quantacunque barbarie; nusquam repererat sic protervos ad mores, sic ferales ad ritus, sic ad fidem impios, ad leges barbaros," &c. After quoting the whole of this description, Camden adds,—"Thus St. Bernard;—and, as I am informed, the present bishop, even at this day, is hardly able to give a better character of his flock."

‡ See an explanation by Dr. Lanigan (*Hist.* c. xxvi. note 53.) of the two different sorts of sponsalia, or espousals, distinguished by the old canon law; one called *de præsenti*, and the other *de futuro*. The latter form of contract, called in English *betrothment*, is what was chiefly practised by the Irish; and that their marriages were by high authority considered legitimate, appears from the language used on the subject by Lanfranc and Anselm, the former of whom speaks of the lawfully wedded wives of the Irish: "legitime sibi copulatam uxorem;"—"legitime sibi copulatas."—See their letters, above referred to, in Archbishop Usher's *Syllogs.*

§ Supposed to be the same as Hy-Breasail, now Clanbrassil, in the county of Armagh.

of the dioceses of Ireland was made, and their respective boundaries fixed;* while by another important regulation, it was declared that the church revenues and lands allotted to the several bishops for their maintenance, were exempted from tribute, chief rents, and other public contributions.

Among the abuses complained of by St. Bernard in Ireland, was the excessive number of bishops,—an evil partly caused, as already has been explained, by the practice adopted, from the example of the primitive church, of appointing chorepiscopi, or rural bishops; and this multiplication of the episcopal jurisdiction it was one of the objects of the synod of Clanbrassil to correct. So far was their purpose, however, from being attained, that at the time of the great council of Kells, about thirty years after, the bishoprics alone, exclusive of the archiepiscopal sees, amounted in number to thirty-four.

CHAPTER XXV.

Learned Irishmen of the eleventh century.—Tigernach, the chronicler.—Great value of his Annals.—Dates of Eclipses preserved by him.—Proofs of the antiquity of Irish records.—Marianus Scotus.—Account of his works.—St. Colman, a patron saint of Austria.—Helias, of the Monastery of Monaghan, introduced first the Roman chant at Cologne.—Monastery erected for the Irish at Erford.—Another at Fulda.—Poems by Mac Liag, the secretary of Brian Boru.—Flann and Gilla-Coeman, metrical chronographers.—Learning of Gilla-Coeman.—Visit of Sulgenus, Bishop of St. David's, to the schools of Ireland.—English students at Armagh.

Before we advance any farther into the twelfth century, I shall briefly advert to the few distinguished names in literature and science, that lie thinly but shiningly scattered throughout the period we have just traversed; this being a portion of my historic task, which, as offering a change and relief from its ordinary details, I would not willingly omit. Of that class of humble but useful writers, the annalists, who merely narrate, says Cicero, without adorning the course of public affairs, Ireland produced in this century, two of the most eminent, perhaps, in all Europe, Marianus Scotus and Tigernach. The latter of these writers, whose valuable annals have been so frequently referred to in these pages, is said to have been of the sept called the Muireadhaigh, or Murrays, in Connaught, and was abbot of Clonmacnois. His Annals, which were brought down by him to the year of his death, 1088, are scarcely more valuable for the materials of history which their own pages furnish, than for the proofs they afford of still earlier records existing when they were written;†—records which, as appear from the dates of eclipses preserved by this chronicler, and which could not otherwise than by written memorials have reached him so accurately,‡ must have extended, at least, as far back as the period when Christianity became the religion of the country.

Another service conferred on the cause of Irish antiquities by this work, independently of its own intrinsic utility, arises from the number of metrical fragments we find scat-

‡ Exclusive of Dublin, which was left subject to Canterbury, there were to be, according to this division, twenty-four dioceses: twelve in Leath-Cuinn, or the northern portion of Ireland, subject to the Archbishop of Armagh, and twelve in the southern portion, or Leath-Mogh, under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Cashel. "On looking over the boundaries," says Dr. Lanigan, "marked for these dioceses, a very great part of which can scarcely be pointed out at present, on account of the changes of names, it is clear that the synod intended, besides reducing the number of sees, to render all the dioceses of Ireland nearly of equal extent; but it did not succeed to any considerable degree in reducing the number: whereas, we find at the time of the Council of Kells, in 1152, many more sees than those here laid down; and, on the other hand, some of the said twenty-four sees not even spoken of; as if, notwithstanding the decree of Rath-Breasail, they had either not been established, or had, in a very short time, ceased to exist."—Chap. 25. § 14.

† "We have, accordingly, fragments preserved by Tigernach of Irish writers, who flourished so early as before the 6th, 7th, and 8th centuries, whose names, whose periods, whose very words are preserved, and the antiquity of whose idiom confirms, to a certainty, the ancient date which Tigernach himself assigns to them."—Dr. O'Connor, *Ep. Nunc. Rer. Hib. Script.* cxvi.

‡ "Quod si inquiras unde harum defectionum notitiam hauserit Tigernachus, aut qua ratione eas ad Regum Hibernorum annos potuerit tam accurate accommodare? Id procul dubio effecisse respondeo, non calculis astronomicis, sed veterum ope Scriptorum Hiberniensium, qui ea quæ vel ipsi viderant, vel quæ in Monasteriorum Bibliothecis reposita erant, ad posterorum memoriam servavêre."—Ib. p. xcviii.

tered throughout its pages, cited from writings still more ancient, which were then evidently existing, though at present no other vestige of them remains. That Tigernach had access to some library or libraries furnished with books of every description,* is manifest from his numerous references; and the correctness of his citations from foreign authors, with whose works we are acquainted, may be taken as a surety for the genuineness of his extracts from the writings of our own native authors, now lost:—thus affording an answer to those skeptical objectors who, because there are extant no Irish manuscripts† of an earlier date than about the eleventh or tenth century, contend that our pretensions to a vernacular literature, in the two or three centuries preceding that period, must be mere imposture or self-delusion.

Marianus Scotus, the contemporary of Tigernach, and, as some suppose, a monk in the very monastery over which he presided,‡ stands, as a chronographer, among the highest of his times. He wrote also Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul, a copy of which, transcribed by himself, is still extant in the imperial library of Vienna. Leaving Ireland about the year 1056, this learned man joined at first a religious community of his own countrymen, at Cologne, and from thence repaired to Fulda, where he remained a recluse for the space of ten years. Being removed from thence, by order of the ecclesiastical authorities, to Mentz, he was there again, as he himself informs us, shut up, and remained a recluse till the year of his death, 1086. In one of the chief merits of a chronicler, that of skilfully turning to account the labours of his predecessors, Marianus appears to have been pre-eminent; and a learned antiquary, in speaking of the use thus made by him of Asser's interesting Life of King Alfred, says that, "enamoured with the flowers of that work, he transplanted them to shine like stars in his own pages."§

It appears that, by Marianus, as well as by his countryman, Tigernach, who had never been out of Ireland, the error of the Dionysian Cycle was clearly perceived; and to the former is even attributed the credit of having endeavoured, however unsuccessfully, to correct it.‖

Besides Marianus,¶ there appeared, in this century, several other distinguished Irishmen on the continent; among the foremost of whom may be mentioned St. Colman, whom Austria placed on the list of her patrons, and whose praise was celebrated in an ode by Stabius, the historiographer of the emperor Maximilian.** Having been unjustly

* "Bibliothecan penes se habuisse patet, omni librorum genere refertam, unde plures adducit auctores, tam exteros quam Hibernos, quorum quæ supersunt opera, ab eo accurate, etiam quoad verba producta, plane indicant eum reliquos jam defiendos, pari fidelitate, etiam quoad verba produxisse."—Ib. p. cxviii.

We find in the obituary of Armagh not many years after Tigernach flourished, a notice of the death of the chief antiquary and *librarian* of that school.—"Primh Criochare a leabhar Coimhed."

† For remarks on the causes which led to the loss of the earlier manuscripts, see chap. 14, of this Work.

‡ This supposition, for which there appears to be no foundation, arose from the mention which he makes of a certain Tigernach, as being the superior of the establishment he belonged to before he left Ireland.—"Hoc autem mihi retulit Tigernach Senior meus."

§ Leland, *Comment. de Scriptor. Britan.* The following is the florid language of the great antiquary: "Quarum et Marianus Scotus venustate totus captus, flores ex eisdem avidus, veluti stellulas, quibus suam inpolaret historiam selegit." Chap. cxix.

‖ Sigebert (*Chronic.*) According to the editor, however, of Marianus (Basil. 1559, of which edition there is a splendid copy in the British Museum,) this chronicler succeeded in correcting the errors of this cycle; "Præstitit mehercle Marianus hic noster quod eorum qui Temporum rationes descripserunt nemo hactenus tentavit. Errores enim in Cycli Decemnovalis ratiocinatione a Dionysio introductos, animadversione studiosa correxit." This enthusiastic editor is perhaps hardly to be trusted, as, besides adorning the recluse of the cell with every possible talent and accomplishment, he tells us that he travelled almost over the whole globe. But Henry de Knyghton also assigns to Marianus the credit of having been the first who corrected the error of the Dionysian period. This chronicler, whose testimony to the merit of Marianus has escaped, as far as I can see, the notice of Dr. O'Connor, thus explains the mode in which our countryman corrected the Cycle. "Itaque ab initio seculi annos singulos recensens xxii annos qui cyclis prædictis deerant superaddidit."

¶ In the instance of Marianus, as in many others which I have had occasion to notice, an effort has been made to transfer to Scotland a reputation which belongs legitimately to Ireland. On these points, the learned of the continent show far more accuracy, not to say honesty, than some of our authorities nearer home. Among the many proofs collected by Usher in confirmation of Ireland's right to Marianus, the following may be worth mentioning. In the great controversy arising out of the claim of Edward I. to a feudal superiority over Scotland, Marianus Scotus was one of the authorities brought forward by the English king; and again, when the same claim was revived under Henry IV. this chronicler was appealed to, as a Scottish authority, in favour of his pretensions. But the advocate who argued for the rights of Robert, in allowing full credit to Marianus, contended, and successfully, that he was a Scot of Hibernia, not of Scotland.—*Eccles. Primord.* p. 735.

It is curious that Marianus himself was, as far as can be discovered, the first writer by whom the name of Scotia, appropriated previously to Ireland alone, was given to the present Scotland.—"See a Letter of Lynch (the author of *Cambrensis Eversus*) appended to O'Flaherty's *Ogygia Vindicated.*

** Surius, *Vies des Saints.* In the commencement of the historiographer's ode there is an allusion to this Irish saint's royal descent, and his visit to the Holy Land:—

"Austriæ sanctus canitur patronus,
Fulgidum sidus radians ab arcto;
Scotiæ gentis Colomannus acer,
Regia Proles.

seized and executed as a spy, some circumstances of a miraculous nature are said to have occurred at this saint's death, in consequence of which he received the honours of martyrdom; and a Benedictine monastery was established, in memory of his name, at Melck, which still exists, it appears, in great splendour. Another Irish saint, named Helias, or Elias, who had come from the monastery of Monaghan, paid a visit, in the course of his travels, to Rome, and is recorded as the first who brought from thence the Roman chant, or church music, to Cologne.*

So great was the resort in those times of Irishmen to Germany, that in 1036 a monastery was erected for them, at Erford, by the Bishop Walter de Glyseberg. There were likewise a number of Irish monks at Fulda, one of the most celebrated of whom, St. Amnichad, died a recluse in that monastery some years before Marianus entered it; and so strong an impression had he left of the sanctity of his character, that, as we learn on the authority of the chronographer just mentioned,† it was believed that lights were occasionally seen, and psalmody heard, over his tomb; and Marianus, as he himself tells us, celebrated mass over that tomb every day for ten years.

Judging of the internal condition of Ireland at this period, even as represented in the friendly pages of her own annals, without taking into account the unsightly picture drawn by a foreign hand, it is not to be wondered at that such of her pious and learned sons as could make their way to shores more favourable to their pursuits should gladly avail themselves of the power. Not that, even in this dark age, the celebrated schools of the country had ceased to be cherished or frequented, nor is there any want of, at least, names of reputed eminence to grace the obituaries of the different monasteries;—scarcely a year elapsing without honourable mention in these records of some persons thought worthy of commemoration, either as poets, theologians, antiquaries, or scribes.‡

Early in this century died Mac Liag, to whom several poems, still extant, are attributed. Chief Ollamh, or Doctor, of Ireland, and secretary to Brian Boru, whom he is said to have survived but a year, this poet's muse was principally employed, as far as may be judged from the pieces remaining under his name,§ in commemorating the warlike achievements of his royal master, and lamenting over his loss.

Some curious historical poems by Flann and Gilla-Coeman, two metrical chronographers of this century, have furnished a subject for much learned comment to the pen of the reverend editor of the Irish Chronicles; who, in proof of the accuracy of Gilla-Coeman's chronological computations, has shown that all the dates assigned by him to the great events of Scripture-history coincide, to a wonderful degree, with those laid down by no less authorities than Scaliger, Petavius, and Sir Isaac Newton.‖ It should have been added by the learned doctor, that when coming to apply this chronological skill to the ancient history of his own country, Coeman was found to be by no means so trustworthy, and for a very sufficient reason: having in his former task been guided by an acquaintance with foreign historians; whereas, in calculating the successions of the kings of his own country, he was led away partly by the national vanity on this point, and partly by the grave fictions of the bardic historians who had preceded him. The author of the Ogygia, who adopted Coeman as his chief guide, in computing the periods of the early Irish kings, has been thereby led into such wild and absurd flights of chronology,¶ as even the most sanguine of his brother antiquarians have refused to sanction.

> " Ille dum sanctam Solymorum urbem
> Transiit, dulcem patriam relinquens,
> Regios fastus, trabeam, coronam,
> Sceptraque tempsit."

* Lanigan, *Hist. Eccles.* c. xxiv. § 2.

† Florence of Worcester, ad ann. 1043. As Asser and Marianus had both copied the Saxon Chronicle, so Florence of Worcester, coming still later, transcribed and interpolated Marianus.—See *Prefaces* to Ingram's Saxon Chronicle.

‡ "As to the ancient Scribes of the Irish, I cannot understand them in any other sense than as Readers of Divinity."—Ware, *Antiq.* chap. xxv. § 3. It should rather be said, perhaps, that in the same manner as the scribes of the Hebrews were both writers and doctors of the law, so the scribes of the Irish were at once writers and doctors of divinity.

§ *Trans. Iberno-Celt. Society*, xciv. In their record of the decease of this poet, the Four Masters have introduced two distichs, or *rosnas*, of his composition, which give by no means a favourable notion of his poetic powers. It would appear, indeed, from the fragments of this nature scattered throughout the Annals, that the rhyming of one hemistich to the other, and the adaptation of the rythm and flow of the words to song, were all that the writers of these *rosnas* attended to; as, with but few exceptions, their meaning is of the most negative description.

‖ "Quam accurate sint Cœmani rationes patebit ex subjuncta tabula, in qua cum rationibus Scaligeri, Fergusoni, Usserii, Petavii, et Newtoni, conferuntur."—See the Rev. Doctor's notes on Coeman's poem, *Prolegom.* xxxv.

¶ By this enthusiastic calculator the date of the arrival of the Milesian colony in Ireland is placed as far back in antiquity as the time when King Solomon reigned in Jerusalem. This was too much even for Mr. O'Connor of Belanagare;—at least in his later and more modified views of Irish antiquity. See his very candid retractations on the subject, *Collect. Hibern.* vol. iii.

Though somewhat anticipating, in point of time, it may save the trouble, perhaps, of future repetition and reference, to state, while touching on the subject, that the chronological list of the Irish kings, which had by Coeman been brought down to the time of St. Patrick, was by another metrical chronographer, Gilla Moduda, who flourished about the middle of the twelfth century, continued to the death of Malachy II., in a poem consisting of a number of *ranns*, or strophes, much in the manner of the metrical list of the Dalriadic kings, composed in Scotland in the reign of Malcolm III.

Among the native authors of this period, whose works were produced at home, may be included Dubdalethe, a nominal archbishop of Armagh,—being one of those laymen whose usurpation of this see was denounced so vehemently by St. Bernard. The saint acknowledged, however, in the midst of his ire, that these intruders were men of literary acquirements;* and Dubdalethe, one of the number, gave proofs of his claim to this character by writing some Annals of the affairs of Ireland (to which reference is more than once made in the chronicles that have reached us,†) as well as an account of the archbishops of Armagh, down to his own time.

While thus not a few of the natives themselves continued to cultivate, even in those stormy times, most of the studies for which their country was once so famous, neither does it appear that the attractions and advantages, by which foreign students were formerly drawn to their schools, had altogether at this dark period‡ ceased. An instance to the contrary, indeed, is afforded in the case of Sulgenus, afterwards Bishop of St. David's who, "moved by the love," as we are told, "of study, set out, in imitation of his ancestors, to visit the land of the Irish, so wonderfully celebrated for learning." Having been driven back by a storm to his own country, it was not till after a long lapse of time that he again ventured on the voyage, when, reaching the country of the Scots in safety, he remained there tranquilly for more than ten years, studying constantly the Holy Scriptures, and storing his mind with the spiritual wealth which they contained. Such is the account given, in a poem written by his own son,§ of the studious labours of Bishop Sulgenus in the schools of Ireland at this period; and Usher cites the poem as a proof that the study of letters had at this time revived in the country, and that Ireland, even in the eleventh century, was still "a storehouse of the most learned and holy men."‖

In recording one of the great conflagrations that occurred in this century at Armagh, the Four Masters state that the part of the city called the *Trian Saxon*,¶ that is, the division inhabited by the Saxons, had suffered considerably by the fire. That this region of the city may have been originally so called, from its having been the principal quar-

* "Viri uxorati et absque ordinibus, *literati tamen*."—*Vit. Malach* chap. vii.

† Annal. Ult. ad ann. 962 and 1021; also, in the Annals of the Four Masters, ad ann. 978, there will be found some verses of this prelate cited. See Ware (*Bishops*,) Lanigan, chap. xxiv. § 4., and *Rer. Hib. Scrip. Ep. Musc.* ciii.

‡ According to some authorities, the schools of Ireland, had, in a great degree, revived at this period. "Les écoles," says Geoghegan, "étoient déjà bien rétablies dans l'intervalle de la journée de Clontarf, jusqu'a l'arrivée des Anglois, principalement celles d'Ardmach."—Tome i. part. 2. chap. 7. Archbishop Usher, by tracing through the ninth and tenth centuries a succession of professors of divinity at Armagh, has shown that even through the gloom and storms of the Danish persecution some vestiges of that noble school may be discerned:—"Quæ idcirco commemoravimus, ut Ardmachanæ academiæ, inter medias Norwagiensis tempestatis procellas, emergentis, iliqua deprehendi possint vestigia."—*Eccles. Primord.* p. 861. Dr. Campbell (*Strictures, &c.*) has thus misrepresented the import of this passage:—"which I have enumerated, in order to trace the *thriving state* of the university of Armagh during the severest tempests of the Norman devastation."

§ *Syllogæ Præfat.*

"Exemplo patrum commotus amore legendi,
Ivit ad Hibernos Sophiâ, mirabile, claros.
Sed, cum jam cimbâ voluisset adire revectus
Famosam gentem scripturis atque magistris,
Appulit ad patriam, ventorum flatibus actus
Nomine quam noto perhibent Albania longè;
Ac remoratus ibi certè tum quinque per annos
Indefessus agit votum, &c.
His ita digestis Scotorum visitat arva:
Ac mox scripturas multo meditamine sacras
Legis divinæ scrutatur, sæpè retractans:
Ast ibi per denos tricens jam placidus annos
Congregat immensam pretioso pondere massam," &c.

‖ "Revixisse tamen bonarum literarum studia, et seculo adhuc undecimo habitam fuisse Hiberniam (ut in Vitâ Florentii loquitur Franciscus Guillimannus) virorum *sanctissimorum doctissimorumque officinam*." Another conclusion which Usher draws from this poem is, that the name of Scots was still in the eleventh century applied, κατ' ἐξοχην, to the Irish.

¶ *Seth do trian Sax.* IV. Mag. ad ann. 1092. "The present 'English Street,'" says Stuart, "seems clearly to have derived its name from the old denomination 'Trian Sessenagh,' or the Saxon portion of the city."—*Hist. Memoirs of the City of Armagh.*

ters of the English students at Armagh, appears highly probable. But to conclude, merely from its being named on this occasion, that there were at that time any such students in the city, is one of those gratuitous assumptions which show more the wish to prove a desired point than the power.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Interregnum of fifteen years.—Contention among the Irish Princes for the Monarchy.—Tordelvach O'Connor, the successful candidate.—Account of the reigns of the O'Brian Princes.—Decline of Tordelvach's good fortune.—Is opposed by O'Lochlin, King of Tirone.—Interference of the Clergy in the quarrels of the Princes.—Its salutary effects.—Death of Tordelvach.—Synod of Kells.—Palliums distributed by the Pope's legate, Papparo.—Labours and death of the great Saint Malachy.—First introduction of Tithes into Ireland.—Misrepresentations respecting the Irish church, corrected.—Murtogh O'Loghlin acknowledged King of Ireland.—Is killed in battle,—Various Synods held during his reign.—Roderic O'Connor, King of Connaught, succeeds to the Monarchy.—Great Convention at Athboy.—Abduction of the wife of O'Ruarc by Dermot, King of Leinster.—Supposed, but erroneously, to have been the immediate cause of the Invasion of Ireland by the English.—Enmity between O'Ruarc and Dermot.—The latter, expelled from his dominions, embarks for England.—Designs of Henry II. upon Ireland.—Obtains a grant of that Island from Pope Adrian IV.

After the death of Donald O'Lochlin, who, for the two years during which he survived his co-regnant, Murkertach, reigned by right, and without competitor, over the whole kingdom, there ensued an interregnum of fifteen years, throughout the whole of which all the various elements of strife and confusion, that had ever mixed themselves with the course of Irish polity, continued to rage in full ferment and force. The most enterprising among the candidates for the monarchy, and he who, at last, carried off that high prize, was Tordelvac O'Connor, King of Connaught, who had already distinguished himself during the latter years of the reigns of Murkertach and O'Lochlin, by frequent and fierce incursions into the other provinces;* and, in one of these sanguinary inroads, was left for dead upon the field. The chief obstacle in the way of his success was the ever active power of Munster; that province having, under four successive princes of the O'Brian race, opposed perseveringly, and with all the confidence which its past history could not but inspire, a formidable barrier in the way of his projects of aggrandizement. More than once had he been driven to extremities in the struggle: but at length policy effected what his arms could not accomplish. By sowing dissensions among the Momonians themselves,—that ever sure mode of distracting the strength of the Irish, and rendering them easy victims whether of the stranger or of each other,—the ruler of Connaught at length succeeded in turning the scale of the contest triumphantly in his own favour. Availing himself of the hereditary jealousy of the Eugenians, respecting their right of alternate succession to the throne,† he found means to separate this gallant tribe from the Dalcassians, and even introduced for a time dissension among the brave Dalgais themselves.

In Connor O'Brian, however, who had succeeded to the throne of Munster, in the year 1120, the ambitious Tordelvac found an adversary in no ordinary degree formidable. Twice, in the course of two successive years, did this bold prince carry the war into the very heart of Tordelvac's dominions, and defeat him signally on his own ground; and again, a third time, having first routed the combined armies of the King of Leinster and the Danes of Dublin, he marched at the head of his victorious troops into Connaught, determined to bring the great struggle for supremacy to an issue. But the interposition of the Church averted the threatened conflict; and a negotiation having been entered into, under the auspices of the Archbishop of

A. D. 1132. 1133.

* IV. Mag. from 1111 to 1118. Annal. Ult. 1114, 1115.
† Annal. Inisfall. (Cod. Bodleian.) Vallancey, from *Munster Annals*.

Tuam, terms of peace were agreed to by the rival princes.* Whatever may have been the stipulations of this compact, it evidently led to, or at least was followed by, a great preponderance of power on the side of Tordelvac, as the date of his accession, by force of arms and the strength of his faction, to the monarchy, is marked at A. D. 1136, two years after this event.

The remaining years of the reign of O'Brian passed unmarked by any new enterprise or achievement; the decided ascendant acquired by his competitor having thrown his latter days into the shade. He was confessedly, however, a prince of great activity and resources, and exhibited, together with the rude violence which pervaded the policy, warfare, and manners of the Irish chieftains of this period, some marks of a munificent and even (notwithstanding some occasional acts of sacrilege) religious spirit. Thus the same prince who, in his several inroads into Ulster and Meath, laid waste without scruple the free lands of churches, and carried off from cathedrals their plate and treasures, yet liberally founded, and continued through life to supply with funds, the abbey of St. Peter, at Ratisbon;† and, if the records of this abbey may be trusted, sent, through the counts and noble knights who were about to seek the Holy Land, large presents in aid of the cause to Lothaire the Roman emperor.‡ Finishing his days like most of the other Irish princes of this time, he died in penitence at Killaloe, and was solemnly interred in the cathedral church, in the grand vault of the O'Brian kings.

Under Turlough O'Brian, the successor of this brave prince, the struggle of Munster against the now paramount power of Tordelvach was obstinately, and for some time with success, maintained. But dissensions again broke out between the two kindred septs; and the desertion of the Eugenians, under two of their princes, to the ranks of the monarch, gave the first signal of the defeat and dismemberment which awaited that restless province. The crisis was hastened, too, by a sudden incursion on the part of the monarch's son Roderic,—a youth of ill-fated celebrity in the melancholy history of his country,—who, entering at the head of a chosen party into Thomond, attacked by surprise the seat of the O'Brians, the celebrated palace of Kinkora, and burned that royal structure to the ground. This act, as encouraging to the spirits of one party as it was insulting and irritating to the other, was instantly followed by a muster, on both sides, of all the forces they could collect, and the great and memorable battle of Moinmor ensued,§ in which the army of Munster was totally defeated, and the King of Thomond, together with the flower of the Dalcassian nobility, left dead upon the field.‖ Seven thousand, according to our annals, was the number of Momonians slain on that day;—a great portion of the loss being attributed to the habitual reluctance of the brave Dalgais either to ask for quarter from an enemy, or to withdraw themselves from the field. Having acquired by this signal victory entire dominion over Munster, the monarch divided that province into two principalities,¶ and rewarded the treachery of the two Momonian princes who had joined him by appointing them its rulers.** A. D. 1151.

From this period the fortunes of Tordelvach, which had now reached their loftiest point, began gradually to decline;—a new rival in the power and honours of the supremacy having appeared in the person of Murtogh O'Lochlin (or, as sometimes styled, O'Neill,) King of Tyrone, and chief ruler of all Ulster, who, as the representative of the royal Hy-Niells of Tyrone, combined in himself at once the purest claims of legitimacy, together with the growing strength of the sword. Taking up the cause of the kingdom of Munster, O'Lochlin received her exiled sovereign at his court, and, having induced the princes of Ulster to form a league in his behalf, took the field with the troops of Tyrone, Tyrconnel, and other principalities of the north; and, after a A. D. 1153.

* IV. Mag. ad an. 1133.

† In the Ratisbon Chronicle is given an account of a mission consisting of two persons, natives of Ireland, sent from Ratisbon to solicit the aid of the Irish princes towards a fund for the building of an abbey in that city. The kind reception these missionaries met with from the King of Munster and other princes, and the munificent aid afforded towards the object of their visit, are recorded with all due gratitude:—"Eos humanitur excepit, atque post aliquot dies in Germaniam honorifice remisit onustos ingenti vi auri, argenti et pretiosorum aliorum donorum. Alii principes Hiberniæ amplissima in Germaniam revertentibus munera varii generis contulerunt." To Connor O'Brian, indeed, is attributed by these records the credit of having founded the abbey. "Jam enim vitâ functus fundator consecrati Petri et monasterii S. Jacobi Scotorum rex Conchur O'Brian."—*Ibid.*

The author of Cambrensis Eversus, to whom these extracts from the Ratisbon Chronicle were communicated by Stephen Vitus (Stephen White,) mentions, on the authority of this learned man, that, in the original records, an attempt had been made to erase with a penknife the words "ex Scotiæ seu Hiberniæ insula;" for the purpose, says Lynch, of inducing a belief that the Scots mentioned in this record were Scots of North Britain, not of Ireland:—"Nimirum ut hoc fuco lectorem ad credendum adduceret de Scotia Britanniæ sermonem in eo monumento, non de Hibernia institui."

‡ "Per magnæ nobilitatis ac potentiæ Comites cruce signatos et Hierosolymam petituros, ad Lotharium regem Romanorum ingentia munera misit."—*Ibid.*

§ IV. Mag. ad an. 1151. ‖ Ibid. 1151. ¶ Ibid. 1153. ** Ibid. 1154.

victory over Tordelvach, who had opposed his passage through Meath, replaced the King of Munster, Turlough O'Brien, upon his throne.*

The conflict with the monarch, commenced thus daringly by O'Lochlin, continued to be prosecuted with equal vigour on both sides, as well by water as by land. In his anxiety to be able to cope with his active opponent, O'Lochlin had despatched agents to the coasts of Albany, to the Hebrides, and the Isle of Man, to hire and purchase ships,† to fit him out an armament; while, on the other side, the monarch Tordelvach, with a fleet accustomed to the Connaught seas, collected from Umalia, Conmacnemara, and Tyrawley, had already attacked and despoiled the peninsula of Inisowen, and laid waste the coasts of Tyrconnel. At length, on the meeting of the two armaments, a desperate action between them ensued; and, as the Four Masters, with evident complacency, report, the transmarine fleet‡ was with great slaughter defeated and dispersed.

Of the period we are now employed upon, one of the most prominent characteristics is undoubtedly the increased strength and activity of the ecclesiastical power: and, however, in general, the interference of churchmen in the merely temporal affairs of life is to be deprecated, the services rendered by them, in a state of society such as now existed in Ireland, was in the highest degree salutary, and far outweighed, in a moral point of view, any mischiefs or inconveniences which their interfering spirit, as an engine of temporal authority, might under other circumstances have a tendency to produce. Subjected to an aristocracy of the very worst kind, for such was the government by a swarm of petty kings, the sole chance of protection for the wretched people, against the self-will of such masters, lay in the power possessed by the church of striking terror into these small tyrants, and compelling them, through fear of what might be their own fate in a future state of existence, to extend some portion of justice and mercy towards those subjected to their absolute will in the present.

There occur in the records of Tordelvach's reign some curious instances of interposition on the part of the clergy, for the purpose of reconciling personal feuds, which, if merely as pictures of the manners of the time, it may not be irrelevant. Before the accession of this prince to the monarchy, there had broken out some quarrels between him and O'Melachlin, King of Meath, which the Archbishop Gelasius, and others of the prelates, undertook to settle. Having fixed on the terms of the reconciliation, they brought the two princes together before the altar of St. Kieran, and there pledged them, upon the relics of the saints,—among which were the Staff of Jesus, the Bell of St. Fechin, and the White Cow of St. Kevin,§—to abide faithfully by the agreement. A short time after, notwithstanding this public and solemn proceeding, Tordelvach O'Connor having, by stratagem, made his way suddenly into Meath, took O'Melachlin prisoner, as though he had been guilty of some violation of the treaty, and confined him in the Castle of Dunmore. Surprised at this act of aggression, the prelates, who had mediated between the parties, hastened to inquire into the cause of so violent a step; when it appeared that no charge whatever was alleged by Tordelvach against his prisoner, but that still he refused to restore him to liberty, except on the condition of his giving up his Princedom of Meath, to be enjoyed for a time by young Connor O'Connor, King Tordelvach's son. This audacious stipulation, though resisted and reprobated by the prelates, was agreed to on the part of the captive king; while on young Connor's head devolved the retribution for so gross an act of injustice, as he was soon after assassinated by an indignant chieftain of Fertulla, in the west of Meath, who could not brook the shame of submitting to any but his own rightful master.

In the very same year occurred another instance of the mediation of the ecclesiastics, showing at once how strong was their desire to soften the fierce spirit of the age, and how rude and intractable were the materials with which they had to deal. For some offence, which is not specified, Tordelvach had ordered his son Roderic to be confined in chains; and, notwithstanding that the princes and clergy of Connaught interfered earnestly in his behalf, and that the chiefs of the latter body, assembling at the Rath of St. Brendan, held a solemn and mournful fast on the occasion, the stern father would not relent, and the young prince was left to linger in his chains. In the following year, however, at a synod in which were present the Archbishops of Armagh and Cashel, and

* Vallancey, from *Munster Annals*. According to the Four Masters, ad an. 1153, it was only half of his kingdom, "*leith righe*," that Turlogh regained.

† IV. Mag. ad an 1154.—We may smile at these rude naval exploits; but the genius of Homer has given immortality to an armament in no respect, perhaps, superior. "The fleet which assembled at Aulis (says Wood) consisted of open, half-decked boats, a sort of galleys with one mast, fit for rowing or sailing."—*Inquiry, &c.*

‡ "Allmuirach."—It is stated (IV. Mag.) that M'Scelling, the commander-in-chief of O'Lochlin's fleet, was punished for his failure by having all his teeth drawn out.—*Bo benadh a fhiacla a mac Scelling.*

§ *Bo ban Cuungháin.*—IV. Mag. ad an. 1143.

the monarch Tordelvach himself, the clergy, on a renewal of their solicitations, procured the release of Roderic from his fetters.*

One of the last acts of the life of Tordelvach the Great, as he is flatteringly styled by his historians, was to receive hostages from the King of North Munster, in acknowledgment of his sovereignty; a few months after which act of power he died,† having left all his precious effects, consisting of jewellery and vessels of gold and silver, his horses and flocks, his bow, quiver, every thing, except his sword, shield, and drinking-cup, to be distributed among the different churches, together with sixty-five ounces of gold and sixty marks of silver. It was also ordered, in his will, that his body should be deposited near the altar of St. Kieran, in the great church of Clonmacnoise.

In the year 1152, was held the great Synod, or National Council, of Kells, at which Cardinal Paparo, as the legate of Pope Eugene III., presided, and distributed the palliums brought by him from Rome to the four several Archbishops, according to their order of precedency, of Armagh, Cashel, Dublin, and Tuam. To procure this distinction for the metropolitan heads of the Irish church had long been a favourite object with that holy and eminent Irishman, St. Malachy, who, in his great anxiety to accomplish this object, had, himself, about the year 1139, being then Bishop of Down,‡ repaired to Rome, and obtained from Pope Innocent II., by whom he was most distinguishingly received,§ a conditional promise to that effect. A. D. 1152.

It was in the course of this journey that the saint, resting on his way, both in going and returning, at the celebrated Abbey of Clairvaux, formed that friendship with the famous St. Bernard, the cordiality of which reflected honour on both, and of which there remains so interesting a monument, in the life of our eminent bishop, written by St. Bernard. Approving of the system followed at Clairvaux, Malachy had left there some of his companions to be instructed in the regulations and practices of the establishment,‖ and it was by these Irishmen, on their return to their own country, accompanied by some monks of Clairvaux, that the Cistercian House of Mellifont, in the now county of Louth, the first of that order known in Ireland, was founded. On the accession of Eugene III. to the holy see, Malachy, who had never lost sight of his favourite object of the palliums, conceiving that the new pope, who had been a monk of Clairvaux, and a disciple of St. Bernard, would be inclined to favour his wishes, set out for France, with the hope of finding him at Clairvaux, to which scene of his humble days the pontiff had at this time paid a visit. But being delayed in sailing from England, owing to an order of King Stephen, who, in consequence of a dispute with the pope, would not suffer any bishop to pass over, Malachy arrived at Clairvaux too late for his object; and being, soon after, seized with a severe and fatal illness, breathed his last in that abbey, exhibiting a calm and spiritual cheerfulness in his dying moments, of which his friend St. Bernard has left a minute and touching description.¶

Besides the distribution of the palliums, the chief affairs that appear to have occupied

* This record of Roderic's captivity had escaped, it appears, the accurate research of Dr. Lanigan. "I do not well understand (he says) what the Inisfallen annals have about Roderic O'Connor's captivity; but Harris (*Bishops, at Tuam, Muredach O'Dubhai*) says, from certain anonymous annals,|that he had been taken prisoner by Tiernan O'Ruarck." Harris, though right as to the fact of the captivity and the date, is wrong, as we see, in his statement of the circumstances. Mr. Whitty (*Hist. of Ireland*, chap. iii.) has but amplified Harris's error.

† The date of the death of this monarch is stated variously by different writers. "Le pere Bruodine," says Mac Geoghegan, "place la mort de Terdelach en 1144, Keating en 1150, Gratianus Lucius et O'Flaherty en 1156, et Wareus en 1157."

‡ Ledwich represents him, erroneously, as being still Archbishop of Armagh, at the time when he applied for the palls.

§ "The pope took off his mitre, and put it on the head of Malachy, as a token of the reverence he bore him. He also made him a present of the stole and maniple, which he was wont to use in the celebration of divine offices, and dismissed him with the kiss of peace, and the apostolical benediction."—Harris on Ware's *Bishops*.

‖ From one of the letters of St. Bernard to Malachy, preserved in Usher's *Sylloge*, it appears that the Irish bishop had, in sending over some others of his countrymen to Clairvaux, entreated that two of those whom he had left behind might be allowed to return to Ireland. To this request St. Bernard, in his answer, objects, not thinking it advisable to separate them so soon from their companions. "When sufficiently instructed," he adds, "in the school of the Holy Spirit, they shall return to their father, and sing the canticles of the Lord, no longer in a foreign land but in their own."—"Ut cantent canticum Domini, non jam in terrâ alienâ, sed in suâ."

¶ "He was undoubtedly," says Dr. Lanigan, "the greatest, the holiest, and the most disinterested, of the bishops of his times. St. Bernard, a truly competent judge, could scarcely find words to express his admiration of him."—Chap. 27. § 12.

The name of this eminent Irish ecclesiastic, St. Malachy, is indebted, chiefly for the fame it still maintains on the continent to a work very generally attributed to him, but of which he was certainly not the author, containing a collection of mystic prophecies respecting the popes. One of the last alleged instances of the accomplishment of any of these prophecies took place on no less recent an occasion than the journey of Pius VI. to Germany, in 1782. The connexion of Malachy's name with this book has given rise to a number of writings relating to him; and, among others, there is one by Jean Germano, mixing up the true man with the counterfeit, entitled, *Vita, Gesti e Predizioni del Padre San. Malachia.*

the attention of the Synod of Kells were some enactments against simony and usury, as well as against the prevalence of marriage and concubinage among the clergy.* There was also promulgated, among the acts at this council, an order from the cardinal, in virtue of his apostolic authority, for the payment of tithes,†—the first introduction, as it appears, of that perennial source of discord into this country.‡

Among the numerous devices resorted to by a certain religious party in Ireland, one of the most favourite has been to misrepresent the history of the Irish church; and as if in contrast to the docile submission which the church of England, from the first, paid to Rome, to hold forth the ecclesiastical system established in Ireland, as having been, till within a short period of the English invasion, entirely independent of the See of Rome. The attempt of the learned and, undoubtedly, conscientious Usher, to prove that the opinions held by the early Irish church, on most of the leading points of religious doctrine and discipline, differed essentially from those maintained at that period by all the other Christian churches of the West,§ formed a part, and, from his name and character, by far the most imposing part, of this bold controversial enterprise.

As a school and depository for these supposed anti-Roman doctrines, Dr. Ledwich, at a later period, devised his scheme of an establishment of Culdees at Iona; and, in order to get rid of connexion with Rome altogether, endeavoured, as far as his meagre grounds would permit him, to inculcate the notion that the Christianity of the Irish was of Asiatic origin,—making efforts almost as fantastic to orientalize their church, as Vallancey was, about the same time, employing to make Asiatics of themselves.‖ A part of the system thus fictitiously supported was to represent the clergy at that time as divided into two distinct parties, the Roman and the Anti-Roman; and so little scrupulous was Ledwich in his mode of farthering this object, that, in speaking of the tract, "De Statu Ecclesiæ," written by Gillibert, Bishop of Limerick,¶ he describes it as addressed "to the *dissident* bishops and presbyters of Ireland," whereas the tract in question is expressly addressed to "the bishops and presbyters of *all* Ireland."

To those who have examined, with any degree of fairness, our ecclesiastical annals, it is needless to say that for the notions thus hazarded there exist not any valid grounds. As an instance of early reference to Rome, it has been shown, in a former part of this work, that on a question of discipline arising, so far back as about the beginning of the seventh century, which divided the opinions of the Irish church, reference was made, according to a canon so prescribing, to the authority of Rome, as "the Head of Cities," and a decision, in accordance with that authority, adopted. It is true, from the secluded position of Ireland, and still more from the ruin brought upon all her religious establishments during the long period of the Danish wars, the intercourse with Rome must have been not unfrequently interrupted, and the powers delegated to the prelate of Armagh, as *legatus natus*, or, by virtue of his office, legate of the holy see, may, in such intervals, have served as a substitute for the direct exercise of the papal authority. But that the Irish church has ever, at any period, been independent of the spiritual power of Rome, is a supposition which the whole course of our ecclesiastical history contradicts. On the contrary, it has been frequently a theme of high eulogium upon this country, as well among foreign as domestic writers, that hers is the only national church in the world which has kept itself pure from the taint of heresy and schism.**

* It was surely unworthy of Dr. Lanigan, besides being short-sighted, as a matter of policy, to suppress all mention, as he has done in his account of this council, of the above enactment against the marriage and concubinage of the clergy. He has himself, in another part of his work (chap. 32. s. 8.,) referred to some canons of the Irish church, relating to the marriage of monks and clerks, which, combined with other proofs, leaves not a doubt that on this point of discipline some of the Irish clergy followed the example set them at that time by their reverend brethren on the continent.

† *Annals of Cluain-aidneach*, quoted by Keating. "On this point," says Dr. Lanigan, "he was very badly obeyed; for it is certain that tithes were, if at all, very little exacted in Ireland till after the establishment of the English power." Chap. 27. § xv.

‡ Before this time there occurs no mention, I believe, in our annals, of any other sources of ecclesiastical revenue than those *Termon*, or free lands, set apart for the support of the several churches, the tribute paid to the see of Armagh under the name of *Rair Patraice*, or the Law of St. Patrick, and a similar tribute to Derry called *Rair Coluimb Cille*. The word *Termon* is evidently derived from the Latin Terminus, which was likewise used to signify church lands in the middle ages. Thus, in a decree of Lotharius III., A. D. 1139, cited by Ducange, "Ecclesiam parochialem S. Servatii solam in Trajectensi urbe habere *decimas et terminum*."

It is amusing to observe, that the only result of Ireland's connexion with Rome which our reverend antiquary, Ledwich, can bring himself to approve, is the introduction from thence of tithes; "than which," he adds, "human wisdom never yet discovered a more equitable and less burdensome provision for the clergy."—Antiq. *On the State of the Irish Church, &c.*

§ See, for remarks on Usher's Treatise, chap. ii., p. 237.

‖ Ledwich was not original in this fancy; as, long before his time, Thomas Rivius is known to have contended that "ante Henrici II. in Hiberniam adventum Romano more in Hibernia non vivebatur sed Græco."

¶ See, for this Treatise, *Usher's Sylloge*.

** Thus Thomas Bosius, "Nulla gens e Borealibus tamdiu mansit in unanimi religionis huius consensu ut Scotia .... agitur itaque annus 1350 ex quo Scoti Christi cultum sunt amplexati et in eo constantes fuere,

On the death of the monarch, Tordelvach, his son, Roderic O'Connor, succeeded him in the throne of Connaught, while the supreme authority passed, without any contest, into the hands of Murtogh O'Lochlin,* King of Ulster, and was by him wielded with a far more decisive and absolute grasp than by any of the titular monarchs who had preceded him. Though, with the exception of some slight show of rebellion in Ulster, which was without difficulty put down, no resistance was opposed to the new monarch's accession, he wisely anticipated any that might arise by displaying the means he possessed of encountering it; and marching his army through the greater part of Ulster, and likewise of Leinster, received the submission of the different chiefs. By Roderic O'Connor pretensions were, for some time, put forth to, at least, a share in the sovereign power; and, as a leading step towards this object, he demanded hostages from the Kings of Leinster and Munster. But we see here an instance of the constant state of uncertainty in which all the political relations of the country were kept by such endless changing and parcelling out of the supreme power; for it is stated that the King of South Munster, when called upon for hostages by Roderic, declared that he would only consent to give him these sureties in case O'Lochlin should not prove strong enough to defend him if he refused them.† In the same year, as the annalists tell us, a fleet was collected by the King of Connaught, on the Shannon, "such as, for the number and size of the ships, had never till that day been seen." A. D. 1156. A. D. 1157.

After some trials, however, of his strength against the monarch, attended with the usual lavish waste of life, Roderic consented to deliver up hostages, and a peace was concluded between them, in the year 1161, when O'Lochlin conceded to his liegeman, in form, the whole of that fifth part of the kingdom, named Connaught; and, at the same time, on a similar act of submission from Dermot, King of Leinster, the possession of this fifth part of the ancient pentarchy was, in like manner, awarded to that prince. Then was it, say the Four Masters, that Murtogh O'Lochlin was King of Erin, without opposition or reluctance.‡

In his transactions with the chieftains of his own province, the monarch was far less successful; and a violent contention between him and Eochad, the King of Ulidia, though carried with a high hand by O'Lochlin, at the commencement, proved ultimately his ruin. The Ulidian prince having, in revenge for some alleged injuries, overrun and laid waste the royal territory of Dalriada, the monarch, incensed at these proceedings, marched a great army into Ulidia, destroying every thing by fire and sword, except the churches; and having declared Eochad to be dispossessed of his kingdom, carried off the chief nobles of Ulidia to Armagh.§ Through the mediation, shortly after, of the primate and the Prince of Orgial, Eochad was pardoned and restored to his kingdom; and the Ulidian nobles, on surrendering their children to O'Lochlin, as hostages, were permitted to return home. A. D. 1155.

To the terms of reconciliation agreed upon between the two kings they had both solemnly pledged themselves, before the altar of Armagh, "on the holy staff of St. Patrick, and the relics of all the saints." Notwithstanding which, in the following year, whether from any capricious return of old hostility, or suspected grounds for new, the monarch caused Eochad to be suddenly seized, and had his eyes put out; while, at the same time, he gave orders that three of the leading chiefs of Dalriada, confidential and devoted friends of the king, should be put to death.‖ Familiarized as was the public mind to acts of outrage and cruelty, the total want of assignable grounds for this burst of barbarism caused its atrocity to be more than usually felt. By the prince of Orgial, in particular, who had been one of the guarantees of the treaty, so savage a violation of its engagements was, with the keenest ire, resented and revenged. Raising an army in his own principality, and being joined by the forces of Hy-Bruin and Conmacne, he attacked the monarch, with superior numbers, at Litterluin,¶ a wild tract in the neigh-

at hoc nulli aliæ genti e Borealibus evenit."—*De signis Eccles.* c. 1. Peter Lombard, in like manner, citing Jonas (*in Vit. Sanct. Columb.*,) says "De hac gente duo ita reliquit annotata: unum quod 'absque reliquarum gentium legibus vivat,' alterum quod 'nihilominus in Christiani vigoris dogmate florens, omnium vicinarum gentium fidem præpolleat.'"

* I have followed Lynch (*Cambrensis Eversus,*) in exempting this monarch from the list of kings who reigned with *resistance* or *reluctance*. "Ut saltem ille ex Hiberniæ regibus Malachiam Secundum secutis rex Hiberniæ citra renitentiam appellari possit." The Four Masters, however, withhold this distinction from him till the year 1061, calling him, in the interim, King of Erin "co fresabhra." See their annals, ad an. 1157. Neither Keating nor Ware include him in their list of the kings of Ireland; while Colgan not only admits him to that rank, but passes the following high eulogium upon him:—"Rex Hiberniæ et Hibernorum excellentissimus formæ præstantiâ, generis nobilitate, animi indole et in rebus agendis prosperitate."

† IV. Mag. ad an. 1157.

‡ IV. Mag. ad an. 1161. "Ri Er. dan cen fresabhra Muircert. ua Lachlamn don cur sin."

§ IV. Mag. ad. an. 1165. ‖ Ibid. 1156. ¶ Now called the Fews.

bourhood of Lough Neagh, where, after having seen the flower of his nobility fall around him, O'Lochlin was himself slain.

In the course of the reign of this active monarch, who stands distinguished as a munificent friend of the Church, there was held some synods at different places, of
A. D. 1156. which the transactions and decisions belong fully as much to temporal as to ecclesiastical history. Thus, at a great synod,* at Mellifont, in the year 1157, convoked for the purpose of consecrating the church of that place, there were present, besides the primate, Gelasius† and a numerous body of the clergy, the monarch himself, and a number of provincial kings. After the consecration of the church, the whole assembly, lay and clerical, proceeded to inquire into some charge brought against Melaghlin, King of Meath; and, on his being found guilty of the alleged offence, he was first excommunicated by the clergy, and then deprived of his principality by the monarch and the other princes.

On this occasion, the king gave, as a pious offering for his soul, to God and the monks of Mellifont, 140 oxen or cows, 60 ounces of gold, and a town-land, near Drogheda, called Finnavair of the Daughters. Sixty ounces of gold were also presented by Carrol, Prince of Oriel, and as many more by Dervorgilla, the celebrated wife of the Prince of Breffny,—the fair Helen, to whose beauty and frailty romantic history has attributed the invasion of Ireland by the English. This lady presented, likewise, on that occasion, a golden chalice for the altar of the Virgin, together with sacred vestments and ornaments for each of the nine other altars that stood in the church.

In the year 1158, was held another synod, at a place in Meath, called Brigh-Thaig, at which, after various enactments relating to discipline and morals, it was resolved that Derry should be raised to the rank of a regular episcopal see; and, a few years after, the synod of Clane conferred upon Armagh, more fully than it had ever before been enjoyed by that school, the rank and privilege of a university, by ordering that in future no person should be admitted a Professor of Theology in any church in Ireland, unless he had previously pursued his studies for some time at Armagh.‡

On the death of Murtogh O'Lochlin, the supremacy reverted to the house of O'Connor;
A. D. 1166. and Roderic, the son of the monarch Tordelvach, was in a short time recognised throughout the country as king of all Ireland. One of his first measures on his accession had been to march with a sufficient force to Dublin, and secure the allegiance of the Dano-Irish of that city; over which he then reigned, say the annalists, in more worthy state than ever king of the Irish had reigned there before.§ From thence, being joined by a considerable number of the inhabitants, he directed his royal progress northward, and received in turn the submission of all the leading chieftains of Leath-Cuinn.

Being now recognised through all the provinces as monarch, Roderic assembled a
A. D. 1167. great convention of the princes and clergy at Athboy, among the number of whom were the primate Gelasius and the illustrious St. Lawrence O'Toole. This good and great man, who was destined to act, as we shall find, a distinguished part in the coming crisis of his country's fate, possessed qualities, both of mind and heart, which would have rendered him an ornament to any community, however advanced in civilization and public virtue. Besides these heads of the clergy, there were also at this meeting the Kings of Ulidia and Meath, Tiernan O'Ruarc, Prince of Breffny, Donchad O'Carrol, Prince of Oriel, together with a number of other princes and nobles, attended by their respective forces of horse and foot, to the amount, as stated, of more than 80,000 men.‖

By some modern historians, this great convention at Athboy is represented as a grand and national revival of the ancient Feis, or Triennial Meeting of the States;¶ and it has been remarked,—with but too much justice, on such a supposition,—how melancholy was the pride exhibited by this now doomed people, in thus calling up around them the forms and recollections of ancient grandeur, at the very moment when even their existence, as an independent nation, was about to be extinguished for ever. But there is

* IV. Mag. ad an. 1157. Said by the Four Masters to have been held at Drogheda, but meaning, as is supposed, in the monastery of Mellifont, which is near that town.—See Ware (*Bishops*) at *Gelasius*.

† The Irish name of this distinguished prelate (for an account of whom see Ware, in *loc. citat.*) was Gilla Mac Liag.

‡ IV. Mag. ad an. 1162. "Communibus suffragiis sanciretur ne ullus in posterum per totam Hiberniam in aliqua ecclesia ad sacræ paginæ professionem sive ad Theologiam publicè docendam admittatur, qui non prius Armachanam Scholam sive academiam frequentaverat."—Colgan, *Trias Thaumaturg.*

§ IV. Mag. ad. an. 1166. "Ro righ ann Ruaidhri ua Concob. feb as onor. e ro righ riamh do Gaoindaibh."

‖ See, for the distribution of this force under the different princes present at the convention, the Four Masters ad ann. 1167.

¶ Warner, Whitty, &c.

no authority in our native records for such a notion; nor with the exception of the unusually large display of troops on the occasion, does this meeting appear to have, in any way, differed from those other conventions, or synods, which were held, as we have seen, so frequently at this period. In the same manner as at all those other meetings, various laws and regulations, relating to the temporal as well as the ecclesiastical affairs of the country, were enacted or renewed; and, so far from the assembly having any claim to the character of a Convention of all the States, it was evidently summoned only for the consideration of the affairs of the northern half of the island; and the only personage from the south, mentioned as having been present at it, was Donchad O'Fealan, Prince of the Desies.

As we have now reached the last of Ireland's monarchs, and are about to enter into the details of that brief struggle which, after so many ages of stormy, but still independent, existence, ended in bringing this ancient kingdom under subjection to the English crown, the reader will be enabled to understand more clearly the narrative of the transactions connected with this memorable event by being made acquainted with the previous lives and characters of a few of the personages who figured most prominently on the scene.

The monarch Roderic, who was, at this time, in his fiftieth year, had not hitherto very much distinguished himself above the rest of his fellow-chieftains, in those qualities common, it must be owned, to them all, of personal courage and activity; while in some of those barbarian features of character, those sallies of fierce, unmitigated cruelty, which were, in like manner, but too common among his brother potentates, he appears to have been rivalled but by few. We have seen that by his father, the monarch Tordelvach, he was kept confined for a whole year in chains; and that he was of a nature requiring some such coercion, would appear from his conduct on taking possession of the throne of Connaught, when, with a barbarity, the only palliation of which is the frequency of the crime in those days, he had the eyes of two of his brothers put out,* in order to incapacitate them from being his rivals in the race of ambition and power. Combining with this ferocity a total want of the chivalrous spirit which alone adds grace to mere valour, it is told of him, that, having got in his power a chieftain of the clan of Suibhne,† he had him loaded with fetters, and, in that helpless state, slew him with his own hand. It is added, as an aggravation of the atrocity, that this chieftain was then under the immediate protection of the Vicar of St. Cieran.‡

While such was the character of the monarch upon whom now devolved the responsibility of watching manfully over the independence of his country, in this its last struggle and agony, the qualities of the prince whose ambition and treachery were the immediate cause of bringing the invader to these shores, were, if possible, of a still more odious and revolting nature. Dermot Mac-Murchad, King of Leinster, the memorable author of this treason, had long been distinguished for his fierce activity and courage in those scenes of turbulence which the state of the country had then rendered familiar. He had, even so early as the year 1140, excited a general feeling of horror throughout the kingdom, by treacherously seizing, at once, seventeen of the principal nobles of Leinster, and having some of the number put to death, while of the remainder he ordered the eyes to be plucked out. Between this prince and Tiernan O'Ruarc,—the Lord of Breffny, a territory in the eastern part of Connaught,—a hostile feeling had early arisen, to which the constant collision of their respective clans and interests gave every day increased bitterness; and, at length, an event, in which Dervorgilla, the fair wife of O'Ruarc, was guiltily involved, raised this animosity to a degree of rancour which was only with their respective lives extinguished.

An attachment previously to her marriage with O'Ruarc, is said to have existed between Dervorgilla and the King of Leinster; a supposition which, if it be founded, acquits the lady, at least, of that perverseness of nature, which would seem to be implied by her choosing as paramour, her husband's deadliest foe. But, however this may have been,—and there exists but little, if any, authority for much of the romance of their amour—the elopement of the heroine from an island in Meath, to which she had been sent during O'Ruarc's absence on one of his military expeditions, was the plan agreed upon by the two lovers, and which, with the discreditable aid of the lady's brother, Melachlin, they were enabled to accomplish. The wronged husband appealed for redress to the monarch Tordelvach, who, taking up his cause with laudable earnestness, marched an army the following year into Leinster, and having rescued Dervorgilla from

* "Regnum auspicatus a fratrum excæcatione, malo augurio."—*Rer. Hib. Script.* tom. 3. DCCLXXXIX.
† Sweeny. ‡ IV. Mag. ad ann. 1161.

the adulterer, together with the dowry and valuable ornaments which she had carried away, replaced her in the care of her relatives in Meath.

This event, the abduction of the wife of O'Ruarc by the King of Leinster, which took place so early as the year 1153, has, by the majority of our historians, been advanced in date, by no less than thirteen years, for the purpose of connecting it with Dermod's expulsion from his kingdom, A. D. 1166, and his consequent flight, as we shall see, into England, to solicit aid from Henry II. The ready adoption of so gross an anachronism, by not a few even of our own native historians, may be cited as an instance of that strong tendency to prefer showy and agreeable fiction to truth, which has enabled Romance, in almost all countries, to encroach upon, and even sometimes supersede, History.

As long as the monarch Tordelvach lived, O'Ruarc was sure of a powerful friend and champion, and one of the last acts of this sovereign's life was to form a league of peace and amity with the Prince of Breffny.* But, as soon as O'Lochlin succeeded to the supremacy, the fortune of Dermot rose into the ascendant,—that prince having espoused warmly his cause; and the very first step of the new monarch, on his accession, was to march an army into Leinster, in order to secure to his unworthy favourite the full possession of that province. During the whole of this reign, the restless, but now crest-fallen, Lord of Breffny had to bear every variety of wrong and insult that a triumphant rival could invent or compass to torment him.

But O'Ruarc's turn of triumph and retribution was now at hand. Roderic O'Connor, the son of his late powerful protector, still extended to him the hand of alliance
A. D. 1166. and friendship;† and the accession of this prince to the throne of Ireland, in the year 1166, gave signal at once for the triumph of O'Ruarc and the downfall of his rival Dermot. Not all the territorial and personal influence which this latter chief had at different periods attained, now availed him aught against the general odium which a long course of crime had heaped upon his head. A munificent founder of religious houses, he had established in Dublin, in the county of Kilkenny, at Ballinglass, and at his own residence, Ferns,‡ many large and most richly endowed monasteries and abbeys, the greater number of which continued to flourish for many centuries, while of some the names and sites may even to this day be traced.

But his cruelty and insolence were remembered far more freshly than his munificence; and the many whom he had trodden down in his prosperity, now took advantage of the turn of his fortune to be revenged. The forces of Breffny, of Meath, of his own kingdom of Leinster, where he had long rendered himself odious by his cruelties, of the Dano-Irish of Dublin, whom he had kept down by the force of his arms,—all these were now eagerly mustered, under the command of his inveterate enemy, Tiernan O'Ruarc, and proceeded to invade his territory. Being thus assailed from all quarters, and deserted even by his own vassals, Dermot retired at first to Ferns; but, seeing no
A. D. 1168. hope of being able to stand against his pursuers, he adopted the resolution of seeking for foreign aid, and, having first set fire to the town of Ferns, took flight privately and embarked for England; while, in the mean time, his kingdom was declared to have been forfeited, and another prince of his family was nominated to be its ruler.

In having recourse for assistance to England, it does not appear that Dermot was influenced by any previous concert with Henry II., that prince being absent, at this time, in Normandy, and too deeply engaged in his humiliating and harassing struggle with Becket to afford much thought to any less urgent concerns. It is well known, however, that this ambitious monarch had many years before projected the acquisition of Ireland, and had even provided himself with that sort of sanctified title to it, which, in those days, the spiritual lords of the earth were but too ready to furnish to the temporal,—thus lowering religion into the mere handmaid of earthly ambition and power. This plan had been conceived by him so far back as the year 1155; but having neither a legal right to the possession of Ireland, nor any ground of quarrel to justify an invasion of it, he saw that by no other means could he plausibly attain his object than by masking the

* IV. Mag. ad ann. 1156.

† For proofs of the friendship subsisting between Roderic O'Connor and O'Ruarc, see the Four Masters, at the years 1159 and 1160.

‡ The names and sites of the religious establishments attributed to him may be found in the List of the Abbeys and Monasteries of Ireland given in Harris's *Ware*, chap. xxxviii. Among the religious houses founded by him was an abbey, near Dublin, called the Nunnery of St. Mary de Hogges, meaning thereby, it is supposed, St. Mary of the Virgins,—the word *eg*á in Irish signifying a virgin. This establishment was for nuns following the rule of St. Augustin, according to the order of Aroasia.—See Archdall *Monast. Hibern.* Dermot was also the founder of the priory of All Saints, which stood on Hoggin Green, now called College Green, and on that part of it where Trinity College stands.—*Lanigan*, chap. xxviii. s. 10.

"The Ostmen of Dublin were overrun and spoiled by Dermot Mac-Murrogh, King of Leinster, who bore a greater sway over them than any other king had done for a long time."—Harris's *Annals of Dublin*, ad ann. 1162.

real motive of his enterprise under a pretended zeal for the interests of morality and religion. With this view he despatched an envoy to Rome, where lately an Englishman, named Breakspear, had, under the title of Adrian IV., been raised to the pontifical throne. The king had previously conciliated the favour of the new pope by sending to congratulate him on his accession; and the request of which his envoy, John of Salisbury, was now the bearer, was such as could not fail to meet with a gracious reception, as, in applying to the pope for leave to take possession of Ireland, Henry acknowledged in him an extent of temporal power such as no pope had ever before thought of assuming; and the address with which Adrian, in his politic answer to the king, repeated and extended this admission, claiming, on the strength of it, a right and jurisdiction, not only over Ireland, but over all other Christian islands,* crowned most worthily this strange and audacious transaction; which presents, in all respects, a perfect instance of that sort of hypocritical prelude to wrong, that holy league for purposes of rapine, between the papal and regal powers, in which most of the usurpations, frauds, and violences of those dark and demoralized times originated.

The permission accorded to Henry by the pope to invade and subdue the Irish for the purpose of reforming them, was accompanied by a stipulation for the payment to St. Peter of a penny annually from every house in Ireland, this being the price for which the independence of the Irish people was thus coolly bartered away. Together with the Bull,† containing the grant and stipulation, was sent also to Henry a gold ring, adorned with a valuable emerald, as a token of his investiture with the right to rule over Ireland; and this ring, as we are informed by the bearer of it, John of Salisbury, was, by Adrian's orders, deposited in the public archives.

It has been supposed that Henry, in speculating on the conquest of Ireland, intended that kingdom for the youngest of his brothers, Prince William, for whom no provision had been made by their late father Geoffry. Whatever might really have been his design, at the time when he sought the papal sanction for his views, other schemes and interests, more pressing, diverted his attention from this object; and among the most urgent was the not very creditable operation of possessing himself forcibly of some territories in Anjou, which his brother Geoffry, had inherited under the will of the late king; a will which Henry himself had sworn to see faithfully fulfilled,—though in utter ignorance, as appears, of the dispositions which it contained respecting his brother. In addition to these various demands on his attention, the opinion of his mother, the Empress Matilda, was decidedly opposed, it is said, to his Irish enterprise; and the Bull was, accordingly, left to repose undisturbed for some years in the archives of Winchester.

Owing to the secrecy, doubtless, with which this singular grant was negotiated, no intimation seems to have reached Ireland of even the existence of such a document, during the whole of the long interval that elapsed between its first grant and the time of its promulgation. Some writers, it is true, have surmised that the Irish clergy were from the first informed of it; and account thereby for the increased activity with which from the date, as they say, of Adrian's Bull, public synods were assembled, and decrees and regulations multiplied,—as if to remove from the Church that stigma of general laxity in morals and discipline which had been made the pretext for so deliberate a design against the independence of the whole country.‡ But it is by no means easy to believe, that, had any knowledge of this singular document transpired in Ireland, there should have occurred no allusion or reference to it at any of the numerous synods held throughout the country; nor even the slightest notice taken in any of our native records of a transaction so full of moment to the future destiny of the kingdom.

That Dermot's resolution to apply for aid to England was, in any degree, prompted by a knowledge of the papal grant, is by no means necessarily to be implied. Already the proximity of the two islands must not unfrequently have suggested the likelihood of an invasion, at no distant time, from the shores of the larger and more powerful. Up to

* "Jam Hiberniam et omnes insulas quibus Sol justitiæ Christus illuxit, et quæ documenta Fidei Christianæ receperunt, ad jus beati Petri et sacrosanctæ Romanæ Ecclesiæ (quod tua etiam nobilitas recognoscit,) non est dubium pertinere."

† Some zealous champions, as well of the papacy as of Ireland, have endeavoured, but without any success, to demonstrate that both this Bull, and the Bull of Alexander III. confirming it, are, upon the face of them, rank forgeries. See Gratianus Lucius, *loc. citat.*; and the abbé Geoghegan's *Hist. d'Irlande*, tom. i. c. 7. The chief argument of the latter writer is founded on the improbability, as he conceives, that either of these popes could have thought of selecting as an apostle for the reformation of Ireland so irreligious and profligate a prince as Henry II. "Voila donc (says the abbé) l'Papôtre, voila le réformateur que le saint Siége auroit choisi pour convertir l'Irlande."

‡ Gratianus Lucius, on much more convincing grounds, attributes this increased zeal for the reform of ecclesiastical discipline to the example and remonstrances of that great luminary of the ancient Irish church, St. Malachy:—Etenim post Hibernos ad bonam frugem a S. Malachia revocatos, sæpe sæpius indicta sunt comitia multo principum et antistitum numero frequentata."—*Cambrens. Evers.*

this period, the tide of incursion appears to have been entirely from the Irish side of the Channel; and, in all the struggles of Wales against English domination, troops were wafted over to her aid in the corachs of her warlike neighbours. In the rebellion of Godwin and his sons against Edward the Confessor, Ireland furnished, as we have seen, men and ships in their cause; and, after the defeat at Hastings, three sons of the conquered king sought refuge and succour in the same country, and were enabled to fit out from thence a large fleet for the invasion of England. On the other hand it appears pretty certain that both William the Conqueror and the first Henry entertained serious thoughts of adding the realm of Ireland to their dominions; and William Rufus, in one of his expeditions against the Welsh, is reported to have said, as he stood on the rocks in the neighbourhood of St. David's, and looked at the Irish hills, that he would "make a bridge with his ships from that spot to Ireland."*

CHAPTER XXVII.

Dermot solicits aid from King Henry.—Receives permission to raise forces in England.—Negotiates with the Earl of Pembroke and others.—Returns to Ireland.—Arrival of Fitz-Stephen.—Surrender of Wexford.—First British settlement in Ireland.—Invasion of Ossory.—Arrival of Maurice Fitz-Gerald.—Unworthy conduct of the Monarch Roderic.—His negotiations with Dermot and the Foreigners.—Dermot aspires to the Monarchy.—Encouraged in his design by the English.—Arrival of Raymond Le Gros.—Barbarous execution of Irish prisoners.—Landing of Strongbow.—His marriage with the King of Leinster's daughter.—March to Dublin.—Roderic's weakness.—His cruelty.—Remarkable Synod at Armagh.

It has been already stated that Dermot, the dethroned King of Leinster, finding himself an object of general odium in his own country, and without the means of encountering his enemies in the field, took the resolution of applying for succour to England; and the port of Bristol, then most in use for communication between the two islands, was that to which he sailed.† On his arrival, however, he learned that the English king, to whom it was his intention to apply for assistance, was at that time in Aquitaine, and thither he accordingly hastened to seek him. Though engaged anxiously then in his protracted and mortifying contest with Becket, and also in breaking the refractory spirit of some barons of Bretagne, over whose territories he had acquired authority, Henry yet listened with politic complacence to the fugitive Irish prince, while he told indignantly of the treatment he had met with from his rebellious subjects, and offered, if restored to his kingdom by Henry's aid, to receive it as a fief, and render him homage as his vassal.

Fully aware of the advantage to be derived, towards the furtherance of his views upon Ireland, not more from the personal alliance and co-operation of a powerful native prince,

* See Leland, book i. chap. i. Girald. Cambr. *Itinerar. Cambr.* l. ii. cap. i. Instead of citing the words of the original, I shall give the whole anecdote, as rendered by Hanmer, in his Chronicle:—"Cambrensis in his Itinerarie of Cambria, reporteth, how that King William, standing upon some high rocke in the farthest part of Wales, beheld Ireland, and said, 'I will have the shippes of my kingdome brought hither, wherewith I will make a bridge to invade this land.' Murchardt, King of Leynster, beard thereof, and after he had paused awhile, asked of the reporter, 'Hath the king, in that his great threatening, inserted these words, *if it please God?*' 'No.' 'Then,' said he, 'seeing this king putteth his trust only in man, and not in God, I feare not his comming.'"

† "Ad nobilis oppidi Bristolli partes se contulit; ubi etiam occasione navium, quæ de Hibernia eo in portu crebris applicationibus suscipi consueverant, &c." Girald. Cambrens. *Hib. Expug.* l. i. c. 2.

Giraldus says nothing of the sixty followers who, according to some writers, accompanied Dermot in his flight; though Leland has carelessly cited him as his authority for the assertion. Considering the circumstances of his departure, it would seem improbable that he should have taken with him such an escort. We find, however, in Sayer's History of Bristol, the following curious notice:—"One of our MS. Calendars says, that 'he (Dermot) came to Bristol in 1168, with sixty friends and attendants, and was here entertained by the ancestors of the lords of Berkely, that is, by Robert Fitzharding or his family.'" Chap. ix.

According to the English chronicler Bromton, Dermot's first step had been to send over his son into England, in consequence of which, says Bromton, he received from thence some trifling aid:—"Cum autem cito post contra eundem regem ferocissimi totius Hiberniæ populi indignari et tumultuari inciparent, eo quod gentem Anglicanam Hibernia immisisset, illi Angli paucitate suæ metuentes, accitis ex Anglia viris inopia laborantibus et lucri cupidis, vires paulatim auxerunt." There is, however, I believe, no authority for this mission of Dermod's son in any of our native annals.

than from the influence such an example would be sure to exercise upon others, Henry saw not, or at least was unmoved by, those better and nobler considerations which would have led a more high-minded man to reject so unworthy an instrument of success. He therefore received without hesitation, the proffered fealty of his new liegeman, and, as the only mode in which he could, at present, forward his object, gave him letters patent, to be employed throughout his dominions, in the following words:—"Henry, King of England, Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, and Earl of Anjou, to all his liegemen, English, Norman, Welsh, and Scotch, and to all the nations under his dominion, sends greeting. As soon as the present letters shall come to your hands, know that Dermot, Prince of Leinster, has been received into the bosom of our grace and benevolence. Wherefore whosoever, within the ample extent of our territories, shall be willing to lend aid towards the restoration of this prince, as our faithful and liege subject, let such person know that we do hereby grant to him, for said purpose, our license and favour."

Having succeeded thus far in the object of his mission, Dermot hastened back, full of hope, to England, and repairing once more to Bristol, made every effort, by causing the letter of the king to be promulgated, and holding forth liberal offers of lands and other rewards, to induce adventurers to take up arms in his cause. All these exertions, however, proved fruitless, and there appeared, for some time, scarcely a chance of success; when, at length, fortune threw in his way the very description of person most fitly qualified, as well by nature as by extrinsic circumstances, to take a lead in, and lend importance to, such an enterprise. Richard de Clare, Earl of Pembroke, surnamed as his father had been before him, Strongbow, was, at this time, at Bristol; and in his brave nature, munificent spirit, and ruined fortunes, combined all that was likely to stimulate as well as adorn a course of warlike adventure. To this nobleman Dermot addressed himself, and, in addition to the temptations opened by the prospect of fame and conquest, offered not only to bestow on him his eldest daughter, Eva, in marriage, but, however inconsistent with the law of the land, to secure to the earl himself the succession to the throne of Leinster, on condition that he would raise for Dermot an efficient body of forces, and, in the course of the ensuing spring, bring them over with him into Ireland. A. D. 1168.

To these propositions Strongbow assented; and the Irish prince, thus far successful, was also lucky enough, in the town of St. David's, whither he had removed from Bristol, to engage in his service two young men of high rank, Maurice Fitz-Gerald and Robert Fitz-Stephen, both Normans and maternal brothers (being sons of the beautiful Nesta, mistress of Henry I.;*) and both fitted, like the Earl of Pembroke, by broken fortunes and political difficulties, to embark in any enterprise, however desperate, which held forth a prospect of speedy relief and change. In consequence of impediments thrown in the way, by Rees ap Gryffyth, prince of that country, who, on some grounds of political difference, not requiring to be here enlarged upon, had kept Fitz-Stephen confined in prison for three years, and was now unwilling to let him escape from his grasp, the negotiation lingered for some time, but, at length, was concluded satisfactorily to all parties;—Dermot pledging himself to give in fee to the two brothers, the town of Wexford and two cantreds of land adjoining; while they, in their turn, engaged to transport into Leinster, in the course of the ensuing spring, a body of English and Welsh forces to aid him in recovering the throne of that kingdom.

Thus precarious and limited were the means, and thus obscure the instruments, by which an invasion so truly momentous in all its consequences was to be accomplished;—the prime mover of the whole enterprise being a rude and unprincipled chieftain, of whose existence, probably, the persons he applied to for aid had never even heard till the moment he presented himself before them; and the few adventurers, of any note, whom he contrived to attach to his fortunes, being persons ignorant alike of the country and the nature of the cause with which they connected themselves, but who, broken down, either by misfortune or their own imprudence, at home, found sufficient in the allurements of lucre alone to supply the place of all other more worthy inducements.

Being thus far assured of foreign aid, the traitor Dermot ventured to return into Leinster, and proceeding privately to Ferns, remained concealed there the greater part

* This lady, who was no less celebrated for her gallantries than for her beauty, after separating from her royal lover, married Gerald, governor of Pembroke and lord of Carew, by whom she had two (or three) sons, and the second of them, Maurice Fitzgerald, was the brave adventurer who now enlisted in the service of the Irish king. His mother, Nesta, after having been carried off from her husband by a Welsh prince, named Caradoc, became, on Gerald's death, the mistress of the constable, Stephen de Marisco, and by him had a son, Robert Fitz-Stephen, the same who engaged, at this time, in the Irish wars, in company with his half-brother, Maurice Fitz-Gerald. See for further notices of this family, *Les Montmorency de France et d'Irlande*, and also Mr. Sheffield Grace's interesting account of the Grace Family.

of the winter; being harboured, as it is said, with grateful fidelity, by the monks of a monastery for Augustin Canons which he himself had founded.* He must, soon, however, have felt sufficient confidence in his own strength,—being emboldened, most probably, by the arrival of some straggling Welsh followers,—to emerge from his A. D. 1169. concealment, as we find him early in this year taking the field, and regaining possession, with the aid of foreign auxiliaries, of that part of his territories called Hy-Kinsellagh. Surprised, at the suddenness of his reappearance, in arms, and attended by foreigners, of whom rumour, as usual, exaggerated the numbers, the monarch hastily collected some forces, and, being joined by his faithful ally, Tiernan O'Ruarc, marched into the territory of Hy-Kinsellagh. As this outbreak of Dermot was evidently premature,—none of the Anglo-Norman chiefs with whom he had negotiated having yet made their appearance,—he was able to oppose but a feeble resistance to the attack of the monarch, and, after a skirmish or two, retreated into his woods. In one of these encounters, the son of a petty prince of South Wales, who had been among the foreigners lately arrived, was slain; and the annals of the day, with the proneness too common among the Irish, to look up to and eulogize strangers,† for no other reason but that they are strangers, describe this Welshman, in recording his death, as "the most excellent warrior in all the island of Britain."‡

How critical was the state to which Dermot had now reduced himself by his rash and weak movement, may be collected from the terms on which, as a matter of compassion, the monarch and O'Ruarc consented to receive his submission. Renouncing all claim to the government of Leinster, he requested to be allowed to retain only ten cantreds of the province, agreeing to hold this territory in dependence upon Roderic, and giving him seven hostages for his future fealty; while the forbearance of his old enemy O'Ruarc he conciliated by a gift of a hundred ounces of gold. This specious submission was, of course, but a means of gaining time till the arrival of his expected succours, and in so far warding off the peril to which his rash and premature sally had exposed him.

Though it must be clear that the fate of a nation such as the Irish were, at this period, embroiled and distracted among themselves by an almost infinite division of interests and factions, nor as yet recovered from the effects of a long series of barbarous invasions, which, though not powerful enough to reduce them to subjection, were but too efficient for the purpose of enfeebling and demoralizing them,—though the doom of a people, thus lamentably circumstanced, was sure to be sealed, and perhaps irreversibly, whenever a more civilized foe found footing on their shores, with skill to avail himself of their dissensions, and a disciplined force to oppose to their rude numbers, yet it must be owned that the almost unresisted facility with which a mere handful of men was allowed to acquire that footing,—the either infatuated or treacherous passiveness with which the first steps of a design so formidable were witnessed,—far outwent even all that might naturally be expected from the weak, degenerate, and disorganized state of the whole kingdom.

That neither the monarch nor any of the other princes were yet aware of the extent of Dermot's designs, or of the powerful patronage he had secured for himself, appears to be highly probable; though assuredly there were wanting no farther facts to awaken vigilance, if not foresight, than the flight of the traitor himself from the country, on avowed purposes of revenge, and his sudden reappearance in the field attended by foreign troops. Even then, had the Irish monarch and his liegeman of Breffny but followed up vigorously their first advantage over the fallen renegade, they might have crushed at once the whole base conspiracy, and at least postponed, if not wholly averted, the fatal extinction of their country's dearly-bought independence.

But it was soon apparent, even to the most infatuated, in what manner the faithless Dermot had all along designed to requite their weak and ill-judged mercy towards A. D. 1169. him. In the month of May, this year, took place the first landing of the Anglo-Normans in Ireland.§ The commander of the expedition was Robert Fitz-Stephen, whom Dermot had engaged, as we have already seen, in his service at St.

* Ware's *Annals*.

† In noticing the partiality of the Irish for strangers, Peter Lombard accounts for the peculiar exception to this tendency, which he thinks their feeling towards their English neighbours evinces, by the sense of injury which the tyranny of that people has left in their minds, and the consciousness that they themselves are looked down upon by them as only fit to be treated with insult and injustice:—"Quod enim putentur non amare Anglicanam nationem, quicquid est de eâ re, procedit totum ex his fontibus, partim quod servitutem putent quæ sub iis est subjectio, partim quod persuasum habeant se ab illis despici et injuriis affici."—*De Hibernia Commentarius*.

‡ IV. Mag. ad ann. 1167.

§ Ware, *Annals of Ireland*, at *Henry* II. chap. i. Flaherty, *Ogygia*, part. iii. chap. 94. Respecting the date of this event, there is some difference among our historians; but that which I have given appears to me the most correct.

David's, and who brought with him now 30 knights, all of his own kin, or household, 60 men in coats of mail, and 300 of the most skilful archers of South Wales. With this small party, which landed at a creek called the Bann, near the city of Wexford, came also Hervey de Montemarisco, or Mount-Maurice, the paternal uncle of the Earl of Pembroke,* and described as a person in needy circumstances, who, without either arms or means, had joined the expedition, rather as the emissary of his noble nephew than as a soldier. On the day following there arrived also at the same spot, Maurice de Prendergast, a valiant gentleman of Wales, at the head of 10 knights and 60 archers; and, as the excitement naturally caused throughout the vicinity by the landing of a foreign force, rendered their situation somewhat precarious, messengers were despatched with all speed to apprize Dermot of their arrival.

Full of joy at the welcome intelligence, this prince instantly collected together all the forces it was then in his power to muster, consisting of but 500 men; and, aware that in despatch lay his only chance of success, hastened to join the invaders. The engagements already formed between them having been renewed and ratified, it was resolved to march with their united forces to the town of Wexford, which both from its proximity, lying about 12 miles from the place of their landing, and the rank it held as a maritime city, was a post combining all the advantages they could desire. On reaching the suburbs of that place, which was inhabited chiefly by Dano-Irish, they were met by about 2000 of the inhabitants, who, on being apprized of their coming, had boldly sallied forth to meet them. But the advantage of a regular and disciplined force over mere untrained numbers,—a disparity manifest throughout the whole of the sad struggle we are about to contemplate,—was no less conspicuous in this its first trial. The crowd that had poured forth to meet the enemy, as soon as they observed the orderly array of the troops, the cavalry drawn up on the flank of the archers, according to the forms of Norman discipline, when they beheld the shining armour and shields of the knights, the novelty of the spectacle caused them to hesitate in their advance, and, after a few moments of deliberation, they set fire to the suburbs, and retired hastily into the town. This slight panic, however, was but of short duration; for when Fitz-Stephen, taking advantage of the circumstance, led on his men to scale the walls, so brave and obstinate was the resistance he met with from the townsmen, who hurled down huge stones and beams of wood on the heads of the assailants, that he was compelled to withdraw his troops, and for the present content himself with burning all the ships that were then lying at anchor in the strand before the town.†

The following day, resolving to renew the attack, he caused masses to be solemnly celebrated throughout the camp, and prepared deliberately for another assault. This the inhabitants of the town perceived, and being struck, most probably, with the patient resolution which such perseverance implied, began to consult among themselves as to the prudence of making any farther resistance. It is even alleged that, among the motives which now disposed them to surrender, were some feelings of compunction at the rebellious part they had been led to take against their king,—feelings, which the clergy within the walls would not fail, it is supposed, to encourage, being, like most of their clerical brethren throughout the country, disposed to view with indulgent eyes the enormities of Dermot's career, in consideration of the extent and munificence of his contributions to the Church. But, whatever were the real motives that led to the step, it was finally resolved by the citizens to capitulate; and terms were obtained through the mediation of two bishops, by which, on condition of the town being immediately delivered up, and hostages given for their observance of fidelity in future, the inhabitants were to be pardoned their first rebellion,‡ and again received into the royal service and favour.

Having acquired, thus, possession of Wexford, Dermot hastened to fulfill his engage-

* Girald. Cambrens. Lodge has mistakenly made him the nephew of Strongbow, while the French genealogical authorities, Duchesne and Désormeaux, make him out to be the father-in-law of that nobleman:—"Il épousa (says the latter writer) Elizabeth de Meullent, veuve de Gislebert de Claire, comte de Pembroc en Angleterre, et mere de Richard de Claire, surnommé Strongbow, compte de Pembroc, dompteur de l'Hibernie, duquel, à raison de cette alliance, un auteur du tems le qualifie parâstre ou beau-pere." This whole account, however, is manifestly incorrect. A number of other mistakes respecting Hervey occurs in an account given of the Ormonde family by a Mr. Butler, which we find cited in Carte.

† Hibern. Expugnat. lib 1. c. 3

‡ Thus early was it considered "rebellion" in the Irish to defend their own rightful possessions. A similar view of the historical relations between the two countries, has continued to be entertained ever since. Thus, Thomas Warton, in the preface to his spirited ode, "Stately the feast, and high the cheer," speaks of Henry II. "undertaking an expedition into Ireland to suppress a rebellion raised by Roderic, King of Connaught," and describes him in the ode as—

Prepared to stain the briny flood
Of Shannon's lakes with rebel blood.

ments to the two Norman brothers, by investing Fitz-Stephen and Maurice Fitz-Gerald (the latter of whom was daily expected) with the lordship of the city and its domain; while, at the same time, he gave in fee to Hervey of Mount-Maurice, in order to attach him to his service, two cantreds lying on the sea-side between Wexford and Waterford. This tract of country is now comprised in the baronies of Forth and Bargie, and it is not a little remarkable that the descendants of its first settlers remained for ages a community distinct, in language and manners, from the natives.* Even to a recent period, a dialect has continued in use among them, peculiar to these baronies, and which, judging from the written specimens that remain of it, bore a close affinity to the Anglo-Saxon.

Had the invaders met with defeat in their first experiment, such a failure might have changed materially the subsequent fortunes of the war; as the junction of Strongbow and others, not actually pledged to the king, depended mainly, of course, on the success of the first blow. In a like proportion, therefore, advantageous to the invaders was the impression produced by this first achievement at Wexford; though so little effect had it in rousing the unworthy rulers of Ireland to any sense either of their danger or their duty, that Dermot was enabled, after his triumphant entry into Wexford, to conduct the foreign forces to his own abode at Ferns, and there remain for no less than three weeks, without interruption or molestation, refreshing the commanders and their troops, and laying the plans of his future measures.

The first object to which he now eagerly directed his force, increased by the accession of the garrison of Wexford to about 3000 men, was an expedition into Ossory,† for the purpose of revenging himself upon the prince of that territory, Mac-Gilla-Patrick, who had, some time before, in a paroxysm of jealousy, seized on the son of the King of Leinster, and, according to the savage practice‡ common at that time both in England and Ireland, ordered his eyes to be rooted out. This chieftain had also been the first to revolt against Dermot, when the tide of his prosperity began to turn. Well knowing what they had to expect from such an enemy, now flushed with recent success, the Ossorians, guarded by their morasses and forests, stood manfully and unshrinkingly his attack; and, as long as they trusted to these natural defences of their territory, the repeated assaults made upon them, by the Lagenians and Anglo-Normans, were all triumphantly repulsed. Misled, however, by a feigned retreat of the enemy, they were induced to follow him into the open and level country; where, being exposed to the onset of the foreigners' cavalry, they were overpowered and borne down; and, the native infantry of the king then rushing upon them, with those long battle-axes which they used, cut off their heads. After the battle, 300 of these heads were laid, as a trophy, at the feet of Dermot, who, turning them over, leaped with delight, as he recognised the different faces; and then, holding up his hands, shouted aloud thanksgiving to God. It is likewise added, though hardly to be credited, that perceiving in the midst of this frightful heap, the head of a man whom alive he had mortally hated, the barbarian seized it by both ears, and lifting it to his mouth ferociously bit off the nose and lips.§

Following up promptly this signal advantage over the Ossorians, Dermot and his allies, now meeting with no farther resistance, carried fire and sword in the inmost regions of that territory. While they were employed, however, in this work of destruction, some symptoms of activity had begun to be manifested on the part of the monarch, indicating a sense, at least, of the imminent danger which threatened the country, and the urgent

* Vallancey, *Transact. Royal Irish Acad.* for 1786. The reader will find in Vallancey's account, a vocabulary of the language of these Baronies, and also a song in their peculiar dialect, which he supposes to have been "handed down by tradition from the arrival of the colony in Ireland."

In the Four Masters we find those foreigners who joined the army of Dermot from Wales called more than once Flemings, and of this people we know some colonies were allowed to establish themselves in South Wales (about Tenby and Haverfordwest,) during the reigns of the first and second Henrys. It was most probably, therefore, of Flemings that the colonies planted in these two Irish Baronies consisted. "Even at the present day," says Mr. Beauford, "the port and countenances of the inhabitants often designate their origin, especially among the females, many of whom, if dressed in the garb of the Netherlands, might be taken for veritable Dutchwomen."—MS. of *Mr.* Beauford, cited in *Brewer's Beauties, &c.*

"Retaining, at this day (says Speed, in speaking of these baronies,) the ancient attire of the English, and the language also itself, though brackish with the mixture of very Irish, which therefore by a distinct name is called Weisford speech, current only in that city and the country about."—*Speed.*

† Hibern. Expugnat. l. i. c. 4.

‡ Henry II., in his excursion into Wales, in 1164, having received as hostages the children of the noblest families of that country, gave orders that the eyes of all the males should be rooted out, and the ears and noses of the females amputated. See Lingard, *Hist. of England*, c. 13. In the reign of Henry IV. it was made felony "to cut out any person's tongue, or to put out his eyes; crimes which," the act says, "were very frequent."—*Hume*, c. 18.

§ In the narrative attributed to Regan, Dermot's attendant, this incident is not mentioned, and Harris supposes him to have suppressed it out of consideration for his master. The authenticity, however, claimed for this record, I shall avail myself of some other opportunity of considering.

necessity of expelling the foreign troops. Foreseeing the likelihood, therefore, of their force being wanted for a much more serious struggle, Dermot and his friends resolved to suspend their present havoc; and, accordingly, a peace, of which reconciliation formed no ingredient, was granted to the harassed people of Ossory.*

The step by which Roderic had thus far alarmed the King of Leinster, and which wore a promise of vigour but ill borne out by the sequel, was the assembling of a large army of "Irish,"—as, for the first time, we find a force distinctly and nationally called,†—and the convoking of the princes and nobles of the land in general council at Tara. From this site of traditional fame the royal confederates proceeded to Dublin; but there, the curse of all Irish counsels, division, began to work its accustomed paralyzing effects; and even in this crisis of their country's fate, unable to co-operate for her deliverance, the northern princes, among whom were Eochad, King of Ulidia, and O'Carrol, Prince of Oriel, drew off the whole of their forces and returned home; leaving to the monarch and his provincial troops, assisted by O'Ruarc, and the Dano-Irish of Dublin, to take the field against the intruders, and punish the traitor who had brought such a scourge upon the land.

How effective, at this critical moment, in crushing at once, the whole treasonous design, would have been a combined and vigorous movement of all the princes of Ireland, may be judged from the panic into which Dermot was now thrown, and the almost cowardly precautions of defence he was driven to adopt. For, though already completely protected, in his fastness near Ferns, by impassable woods, precipices, and morasses, he yet called in the aid of art to strengthen still farther his position; and, under the special advice and direction of Fitz-Stephen, caused artificial pits and trenches to be formed, in addition to those with which nature had already provided him. Besides the grounds for alarm exhibited in the menacing posture assumed by Roderic, there was also another warning presented to him in the dispersion of most of his Irish followers; leaving him, at last, but few supporters besides his small band of English, who all, to a man, adhered unflinchingly to his cause.

Such was the relative strength and bearing of the two parties, when Roderic invested with his immense force the position of Dermot at Ferns; and when, had but a portion of the courage and patience which actuated the besieged few been felt by the numerous force which encompassed them, the final result of the experiment could not have been doubtful. But, as it was, on the part of the Irish—or, to speak more justly, on the part of their unworthy commander—there was shown a total want not merely of the high and national feeling which should have predominated in such an emergency, but even of the ordinary, worldly policy which a prudent regard to self-interest and safety would dictate. Preferring a tame and temporizing line of conduct to manly decision and vigour, Roderic tried his ground by negotiation, first with Fitz-Stephen, and then with Dermot, hoping, by a plausible appeal to the interests of one or the other, to dissolve their mutual league. But, the consciousness of weakness this conduct betrayed, and the deceit towards both parties which the attempt to tamper with each implied, produced an effect the very reverse of what was intended, and but confirmed the two leaders the more fixedly in their plan of alliance and mutual aid.

The feeble monarch, though thus exposed and baffled, condescended, after a short interval, to renew the negotiation, and preferring any course, however inglorious, to the obvious alternative of the sword, accepted such terms at last from the enemies of his country's independence as gave them but refreshed power and inclination to assail it. By a compact now entered into between the two parties, it was agreed that the full right of sovereignty over the kingdom of Leinster should be enjoyed inalienably by Dermot and his heirs, on the usual condition of his acknowledging the supremacy of the present monarch, and rendering him homage as his liege subject. In pledge for the performance of this service, Dermot delivered up as hostage his favourite son Connor;‡ the monarch promising on his part that, should the compact be faithfully observed towards himself, he would give to this youth his daughter in marriage.

By this mean and disgraceful treaty all those possessions which Dermot had forfeited through his treason, were, under the sanction of the supreme authority, restored to him; and the only effort made towards saving the country from a foreign yoke, was the addition of a secret article to the treaty by which the King of Leinster pledged himself not to call over any more foreigners into the kingdom, promising, at the same time, that he would dismiss those now in his service, as soon as the affairs of his province should have settled into a more tranquil state. Whether to this article, as well as to the others, the solemn

* Hibern. Expugnat. l. 1. c. 3. † IV. Mag.
‡ IV. Mag. ad ann. 1139.

sanction of an oath was appended, does not clearly appear; but it was soon seen that the "Foreigners' Friend," as he was nicknamed, could not be trusted either on his honour or his oath. In the mean time, the treaty of peace having been ratified, Roderic drew off all his forces, leaving this prince and his foreign auxiliaries to pursue their career of spoil and aggression unmolested.

How little sincere were Dermot's promises, with respect to the farther employment of foreigners in his service, there was soon an opportunity afforded him of proving, by the arrival, in the port of Wexford, of Maurice Fitz-Gerald, Fitz-Stephen's brother, attended by ten knights, thirty horsemen, and about a hundred archers. So far from scrupling to employ this small, but, to him, most seasonable succour, the king hastened immediately in person to receive them; and, as Fitz-Stephen was just then occupied in erecting a castle, or fort, on the summit of a hill near Wexford, associated the new comer with himself in the command of an army he was about to lead against Dublin. The allegiance exacted by the throne of Leinster from that city had been, at all times, reluctantly and precariously submitted to; and the exceeding rigour of Dermot's sway during his prosperity, had rendered him as odious as he was formidable to the inhabitants. They had, therefore, availed themselves of the change in his fortunes to get rid of a yoke so insulting and oppressive, and had chosen for their governor a prince of their own mixed race named Mac Torcill. To revenge this and some other still stronger marks of their hate towards him was the object of his present expedition; and being attended by Fitz-Gerald and his force to the confines of Dublin, he there initiated his foreign allies in that process of havoc, spoliation, and burning, of which he himself was so practised a master; till, at length, the wretched and exhausted inhabitants, sinking under the well-known scourge, implored for mercy and peace; and their proffers of allegiance being, in the very satiety of revenge, accepted, the invading army was withdrawn.

Even for the relief thus reluctantly granted, his victims were, in a great measure, indebted to a new impulse in another direction of wrong, which his ever active bad passions had just received. The monarch Roderic, whose military zeal was always most prompt when exerted in conflict with his own countrymen, had, after his ignoble capitulation with Dermot and the Anglo-Normans, carried his forces into North Munster, for the purpose of attacking and punishing Donald, the prince of that country, who, encouraged by the tottering state of the monarchy, had cast off his allegiance to Roderic, and bade open defiance to the power of Connaught. To assist this rebellious prince, and thereby distract and enfeeble still more the authority of the monarch, was the object to which Dermot now found himself able to transfer the whole of his victorious force; in consequence of which Roderic, outnumbered and overpowered, was compelled, after several unsuccessful efforts, to retire into Connaught.

Elated by this flow of prosperity, the King of Leinster no longer limited his ambition to the secure possession of his own hereditary sovereignty, but extended his prospects to the acquisition of the supreme throne itself; nor on consulting his confederates, Fitz-Stephen and Fitz-Gerald, did he find them, in any degree, indisposed to his design. On the contrary, these able and zealous partisans, perceiving how efficiently such a scheme might be turned to account for the English interests, gave every encouragement to his ambitious project; advising most strongly, as the only means of ensuring success, that he should immediately renew his application to Strongbow,* and urge him to fulfill his promise of aid without farther delay.

This lord, who had been watching the progress of his countrymen in Ireland with all the anxiety which his own contemplated share in their proceedings would naturally excite, had even already observed enough in the state of affairs throughout that country, to convince him that, as a field of speculation, it was well worth the working, nor presenting any difficulties but such as courage and judicious conduct might easily find means to overcome. At the time, however, when he made up his mind to this conclusion, the definite object for which letters patent had been granted to Dermot, namely, the recovery of his own dominion, had been fully accomplished; and, as the war was to be henceforth continued on new and different grounds, it appeared to the earl that,

* Giraldus (*Hib. Expug.* lib i. c. 12.) professes to give the substance of the letter addressed, in pursuance of this advice, to Strongbow. But, like those speeches which he occasionally puts into the mouths of his heroes, this letter is evidently of his own florid manufacture. The following is the sentimental style in which he supposes Dermot and his Norman associates to have addressed the earl:—"Ciconias et hirundines observavimus; venerunt aves estivæ; venerunt, et, Circio jam dante, reverse sunt. Desiderabilem et diu expectatam præsentiam vestram nec Favonius nec Eurus advexit." Thus translated by Hooker:—"We have already seen the storcks and swallows, as also the summer birds are come, and with the westerly winds are gone again; we have long looked and wished for your coming, and, albeit the winds have been at east and easterly, yet hitherto you are not come to us."

before he himself took any part in it, a farther authority should be asked and obtained from the king. For this purpose he repaired to Normandy, where Henry was at that time sojourning; and, having urged his suit with earnestness, received in return an evasive and ambiguous answer, such as, from a prince of Henry's calculating nature, must have been designed, he knew, to admit of a double interpretation. He accordingly accepted it as meaning an assent to his prayer; and, returning to England, proceeded to prepare with all due vigour for his expedition.

As soon as the season admitted of the embarkation of troops, he sent over to Ireland, as his advanced guard, ten knights and seventy archers, under the conduct of Raymond le Gros;* who, landing with his small party at a place not far from Waterford, under a rock then called Dundolf, was soon joined by Hervey of Mount-Maurice, and a few other knights.† Here, with the hopes of being able to maintain themselves till the arrival of Strongbow, they hastily raised a small fort of turf and wood. But the lodgment of foreign troops so near their city being viewed with apprehension by the citizens of Waterford, it was thought advisable to attack the intruders before their numbers should be increased; and a large tumultuary force, amounting, we are told, to 3000 men, which had been collected with the aid of O'Faolan, Prince of the Desies, and O'Ryan of Idrone, crossed the Suir which divides Leinster from Desmond, and advanced to attack the English fort.

In the confidence of valour, the young Raymond le Gros had sallied forth with his small garrison to receive this multitude; but, on seeing their immense superiority of numbers, retired again into the fort, being followed so closely by the assailants that many entered along with him. Thus pressed, the gallant Raymond, with the true instinct of courage, faced round on his pursuers, and ran the foremost person of those who were within the gateway through the body, crying out at the same time to his own companions to be of good cheer; and this example having animated his small band, while their assailants, panic-struck by the suddenness and daring of the action, gave way, the young warrior again sallied forth at the head of his comrades, and the whole multitude fled before him in utter confusion and dismay. Above 500 men, it is stated, were cut down in that rout by the pursuers; and when tired of killing, says the chronicler, they carried a great number of those whom they had made prisoners to the rocks, and cast them headlong into the sea.

Seventy of the principal inhabitants of Waterford having been made prisoners in the pursuit, sums of money to any amount were offered for their ransom by the inhabitants; and even the surrender of the city itself was proffered as the purchase of their liberty. But it had been determined that the fate of these citizens should be decided by a council of war; and seldom, if ever, has an achievement so truly heroic been sullied by a sequel so wholly unworthy of the character of soldiers and brave men. The gallant Raymond, as might have been expected, declared strongly for the humane alternative of accepting ransom for these prisoners, and restoring them all to their families. But the pitiless counsel of Hervey of Mount Maurice, who urged thus early the policy vainly pursued ever since, of "striking terror into the Irish," was unfortunately suffered to prevail;‡ and the prisoners, borne away to the rocks, were there most cruelly put to death, by first breaking their limbs, and then casting them down headlong into the sea.§

While these events were passing in Ireland, the Earl of Pembroke, having left Chepstow for that country, proceeded through the coasts of South Wales to St. David's, gathering new followers to his standard all the way. Having collected thus a sufficient force, consisting partly of volunteer adventurers, and partly of his own vassals, he was

* This young officer, whose name was Raymond Fitzwilliam, but who bore the cognomen of Le Gros, as a personal characteristic, was of the same ancient and noble race from whence sprung so many other of the leaders of this Irish expedition, being the second son of William Fitzgerald, Lord of Carew, and, accordingly, nephew both to Maurice Fitzgerald and Robert Fitzstephen.

† Hibern. Expugnat. l. i. c. 13.

‡ Ibid. c. 14, 15. Some of the arguments employed respectively by the two leaders have formed the staple of almost all that has been said or written upon the subject ever since.—"Recollect," said Raymond, "they are not enemies now, but our brother men; not rebels, but conquered foes,—conquered by adverse fortune while standing in defence of their own country. Honourable was the cause for which they stood."—"Hi non hostes jam sed homines; non rebelles, sed debellati, sed victi, sed fatis urgentibus, ob patriæ tutelam superati. Honesta quidem occupatio." Hervey, on the other side, could see no safety but in severity.—"Let our victory," he said, "be so used, as that the destruction of these now in our hands should act as a warning to others, and that in future this lawless and rebellious nation may be struck with terror by the example."—"Nostra siquidem sic victoria consumetur, ut istorum interitus aliorum sit metus. Et ipsorum exemplo populus effrenis ac rebellis nobiscum de cetero congredi reformidet."

§ "An act (says Lord Lyttelton) which stains the whole glory of their honourable victory, and which the king should have punished, when he came into that country, by some very signal mark of his royal displeasure against the adviser." Even Staniharts, the warm apologist of the English throughout, thus reprobates this act:—Ex quo tempore Herveius gravi diuturnaque infamiâ et invidiâ flagraret; cum nemo repertus esset, cui non ista civium internecio prorsus displiceret."—*De Reb. in Hist. Gest.* l. 2.

just on the point of embarking with his army from Milford, when an order reached him from King Henry, forbidding positively that he should leave the kingdom.* A command so decisive from his royal master could not but occasion at least a pause in the earl's purpose; and had the prospects that awaited him at home been somewhat less dark, or the hopes that beckoned him to the opposite shore less inviting, the duty of the subject might possibly have prevailed over the sanguine promptings of the adventurer. As it was, however, his hesitation could be but momentary; the order to sail was boldly issued; and, on the eve of the feast of St. Bartholomew, his fleet landed him near Waterford with an army of about 1200 men, of whom 200 were knights.†

Immediately on their arrival, these troops were joined by Raymond le Gros, with a small body of horsemen; and, as Strongbow was anxious to commence his operations by a successful attack upon Waterford, it was determined that, with the forces then under his command, and without waiting for the promised junction of Dermot, the assault upon the city should be undertaken on the following day.

Though but little display of heroism was to be expected from the people of Waterford, who had tamely suffered the murderers of their seventy citizens to remain three whole months‡ unmolested in their neighbourhood, their defence of the city on the present occasion appears to have been spirited and vigorous; and, with the assistance of Faolan, Prince of the Desies, they twice repulsed the attempts of the assailants. At length Raymond, perceiving in the east angle of the walls a small house projecting on timber props, ordered some of his knights to hew down these props, which having been done, the house fell, and, with it, part of the wall. A breach being thus opened, the troops all poured into the city, and there took dreadful revenge for the resistance which they had encountered, by a general slaughter of all whom they met in the streets, without distinction or mercy. In a tower, of which Reginald, a Dano-Irish lord, was governor, that chieftain himself, and O'Faolan, Prince of the Desies, had taken refuge; but, being dragged forth from thence, were on the point of being put to death, when most unexpectedly they found themselves rescued by the interposition of King Dermot, who had just arrived at this scene of carnage, with his daughter Eva, the destined bride of Strongbow, and accompanied also by his trusty liegemen, Maurice Fitz-Gerald and Fitz-Stephen.

The earl received him with all the honours of triumph; though but short was the time allowed for ceremony or welcome, as, in consequence of news from Dublin of the revolt of the governor of that city, it was necessary to march the army thither without delay. The still reeking horrors, therefore, of the sacked and ruined city were made to give place to a scene of nuptial festivity; and the marriage of Strongbow with the Princess Eva, according to the promise pledged to that lord at Bristol, was, in haste and confusion, celebrated. Immediately after the ceremony, the banners of the respective forces were displayed, and the whole army, with the exception of a few troops left to garrison Waterford, were in full march for Dublin.

The bold step now taken by Hasculf, the governor of that city, in declaring his defection from Dermot, is supposed to have been adopted chiefly in consequence of this new descent of the foreigners, and also in concert with the monarch, Roderic, who, under a similar alarm at the progress of the English, had assembled an immense army, and, joined by the troops of the princes of Breffny and Orid, had taken up his post at Clondalkan, a few miles southward of Dublin. In the mean time, the confederate forces of the earl and Dermot were rapidly pursuing their march; but, having learned that the woods and defiles, between them and the city, were occupied by native troops, they wound their course along the tops of the mountains of Glendalough, and so reached, uninterrupted, the walls of Dublin.§ The inhabitants, who had relied for the protection of the city on the strength of the Irish force immediately in its vicinity, were now seized with consternation at the sudden appearance of so large an army at their very gates.

In this emergency, their only resource was one not unfrequently resorted to, in Irish warfare, the mediation of the clergy; and the pious and exemplary Archbishop of Dublin, St. Laurence O'Toole, who was then within the walls, undertook, at the earnest request of the citizens, to intercede with Dermot in their behalf. But, to men with arms in their hands, and confident in their own superiority, such late and weak attempts at propitiation could hardly be expected to appeal with force or success. Accordingly, while the negotiators, on each side, were conferring together, outside the walls, respecting the

* *Gulielm. Nvubrig.* l. 2. c. 26.—"Cumque jam solvere pararet, affuerunt qui ex parte Regis transfretationem inhiberent. Ille vero, nullius rei quam in Anglia possidere videbatur remoratus affectu, nihilominus transfretavit."

† Hibern. Expugnat. l. 1. c. 16. ‡ Ware, *Annals.*

§ "Per convexa montium de Glandelochan latere, exercitum ad nobis menia duxit indemnem."—*Hibern. Expugnat.* l. 1. c. 17.

demand of thirty hostages, which Dermot had advanced as the condition of his agreeing to terms, the young Milo de Cogan, and his adventurous comrades, were eyeing the ramparts in search of an assailable point; and, as soon as the time allowed to St. Laurence for the purpose of parley had expired, or, according to some accounts, even before Milo de Cogan and Raymond gave the signal for the assault, and, leading their troops to a part of the walls which they had observed to be ill defended, were, in a few moments, in the streets of the city; where the wretched inhabitants, thus taken off their guard, having been led to expect terms of peace, became almost unresistingly victims of the slaughter and plunder which ensued.

Notwithstanding, however, the suddenness of the assault, the governor, Hasculf, and a number of the leading citizens, succeeded in gaining some small vessels which lay at anchor in the harbour, and, with the aid of a favourable wind, made their escape to some of the Orkney Isles.* In the midst of all the confusion and massacre, the good St. Laurence was seen exposing himself to every danger, and even, as his biographer describes him, dragging from the enemies' hands the palpitating bodies of the slain, to have them decently interred.† He also succeeded, at great risk, in prevailing upon the new authorities to retain most of the clergy in their situations, and recovered from the plunderers the books and ornaments which had belonged to the different churches.

On Strongbow's departure from Waterford, he had left, for the defence of that town, a small garrison, chiefly of archers; which Cormac M'Carthy, King of Desmond, by a sudden and vigorous attack surprised and defeated.‡

While the invaders were thus employed in possessing themselves of the most important city in the kingdom, the forces of the monarch, instead of opposing them, and endeavouring to embarrass, if not wholly defeat, their operations, had been drawn off for the local and partisan purpose of supporting his liegeman O'Ruarc, in the possession of the territory of East Meath, over which he had lately, by an act of arbitrary favour, placed him. To back by arms his own and O'Ruarc's claims, in that territory, was the object for which he now marched his forces into Meath; and no sooner had Dublin been taken possession of, than Dermot determined to transfer the scene of his own operations to the same quarter. In addition to the desire of still farther humbling Roderic, the indulgence of his old and inveterate grudge to Tiernan O'Ruarc lent, of course, a peculiar zest to the enterprise. Having, through Strongbow's recommendation, intrusted the government of Dublin to the gallant Milo de Cogan, he sent the earl, with a large force, to invade and lay waste the lands of Meath, and followed himself, soon after, with the remainder of the army.

Besides the usual waste and ruin of which fire and sword were the prompt instruments, a more than ordinary excess of barbarity is said to have marked the course of these confederate chiefs, as well through the parts of Meath now under the government of O'Ruarc, as in that chieftain's own principality of Breffny. The sacrilegious violence once so foreign to the character of the Island of Saints, and which had been engrafted on Irish warfare by the evil example of the Danes, was exhibited, in the course of this expedition, in its most revolting form; and the churches of Cluanrard, Tailten, Cell-Scire, and Disirt-Ciaran are among those mentioned as having been despoiled and burnt down by the ravagers.§

Of all these insulting acts of aggression, the humbled monarch found himself forced to be an unresisting witness, wanting the power, even if possessed of the spirit, to resent such reiterated defiance of his authority and arms. In this dilemma, resorting once more to his old expedient of negotiation, he despatched deputies to the camp of Dermot, who were charged to upbraid him, in the name of their monarch, with these gross and repeated violations of all his most solemn engagements; and to threaten, moreover, that if he did not instantly withdraw his troops, and restrain the excursion of his foreigners, the head of his son, who was still in Roderic's hands as a hostage, should be cut off and sent to him. To this message Dermot haughtily replied, that he meant to persevere as he had begun, nor would desist till he had brought Connaught, his ancient inheritance, under his sway; and also recovered for himself, not merely by arms, but in right of his title,‖ the supreme government of all Ireland. On receiving this insolent answer, the weak and angry Roderic, whose few accesses of vigour were as odious as his general weakness was contemptible, ordered the unoffending son of Dermot to be beheaded,¶

* IV. Mag. ad ann. 1170. It is stated, in the account given by the Four Masters of this event, that Asgal Mac Ragnail, the King of the Northmen of that city, also made his escape.

† Vita S. Laurentii, cap. 18.

‡ IV. Mag. ad an. 1170.

§ IV. Mag. ad ann. 1170.

‖ It appears to have been on his descent from the monarch Murkertach O'Brien, that he founded this claim to the sovereignty.

¶ Stanihurst, lib. 3.—IV. Mag. *Ibid.* In the face of this record—if, indeed, he knew of its existence—Keating tells us that Roderic, "astonished at the insolence of this petty prince (Dermot,) resolved in his

putting to death, at the same time, a grandson of that prince, the son of Donald Kavenagh, and also a third hostage he had received from him, the son of his Comhalt, or foster-brother, O'Coallag. By these multiplied acts of cruelty, the wretched monarch drew down upon himself universal odium.

Among a people of strong religious feelings, such as the Irish had, even to this period, remained, notwithstanding the ignorance and barbarism to which internal misrule and foreign invasion had reduced them, it was not unnatural that the new scourge which had now fallen upon their land should be viewed with terror as a judgment of God on account of the sins of the people,—an awful renewal, by the hand of Providence, of all that their fathers had endured in days gone by, when first the Black and the White Strangers descended in swarms upon their shores. That some such panic must at this period have taken possession of them appears manifest, not merely from the unmanly alarm with which, on several occasions, whole multitudes of the natives are said to have fled before small parties of these foreigners, but also from the proceedings of a remarkable synod, convened at Armagh this year, for the purpose of taking into their consideration the perilous state of the country. Concluding that the sins and offences of the people were the great cause of the awful calamities that threatened them, they resolved to seek, in some general and national act of repentance the salutary means both of propitiation and self-relief.

"The synod declared," says the chronicler, "that this calamity was to be held as an infliction of Divine justice, on account of the sins of the Irish people; and more especially because that, in former times, they used to make bond-slaves of the English whom they had purchased as well from merchants as from robbers and pirates;—a crime, for which God now took vengeance upon them by delivering them into like bondage themselves. For the English people," it was added, "while yet their kingdom was in a state of security, were accustomed, through a common vice of the nation, to expose their children for sale;* and, even before they were pressed by want or distress, to sell their own sons and kinsmen to the Irish.† It was therefore natural to suppose that the purchasers, as well as the sellers, in such a traffic, would well deserve, for their enormous crime, to be doomed themselves to wear the yoke of servitude.‡ "Acting upon the spirit of these humane and Christian views, the synod unanimously decreed and ordered that all the English throughout the island, who were in a state of slavery, should be restored to their former freedom."

It may be remarked here that slavery had, from a very early period, existed among the Irish, as is proved by the regulations respecting bondmen and bondwomen, which are found in some very ancient canons of our Church.§ Wherever the practice, indeed, of piracy, whether in ancient or modern times, has prevailed, there the traffic in human

passion to execute his purpose upon the royal hostage he had in his hands, but, upon mature reflection, he desisted . . . . . knowing that such a barbarous act would render him odious to his people, whose affections were his only support."

* Dr. Warner, in referring to this curious document, observes, very justly,—"Cambrensis, Bishop of St. David's, who gives this account, adds, 'That the English, by a common vice of their country, had a custom to sell their children and kinsfolk into Ireland, although they were neither in want nor extreme poverty.' The English reader, after this, must never charge the Irish of that age with being rude and barbarous; because he will be bid to look at home."—*Hist. of Ireland*, vol. i. book 2.

† By reference to the original it will be seen how carelessly, if not ignorantly, Dr. Campbell has interpreted the meaning of this passage.—"It was the common vice," he says, "of all the English, from their first settlement in Britain, to expose their children and relations to sale *rather than that they should suffer any want.*" —*Strictures, &c.* sect, 12. With the extremities to which want reduces its victims, the Irish were themselves but too well acquainted; and the annalists frequently, in describing the horrors of a famine, say that it was such as "would compel a father to sell his son or daughter for food." Thus in the Ulster Annals (*ad ann.* 964:)—"Gorta mor diulocta in er, eo renadh an tathair a mac et ingen arbiadh."

‡ "Tandem communis omnium in hac sententia resedit, propter peccata scilicit populi sui, eoque præcipue quod Anglos olim tam a mercatoribus quam a prædonibus atque pyratis, emere passim et in servitutem redigere consueverant, divinæ censura vindictæ hoc eis incommodum accidisse, ut et ipsi quoque ab eadem gente in servitutem vice recriproca jam redigantur. *Anglorum namque populus adhuc integro eorum regno, communi gentis vitio, liberos suos venales exponere, et, priusquam inopiam ullam aut inedium sustinerent, filios proprios et cognatos in Hiberniam vendere consueverant. Unde et probabiliter credi potest, sicut venditores olim, ita et emptores tam enormi delicto juga servitutis jam meruisse.*"—Girald. Cambrens. *Hib. Expug.* lib i. c. 18. In Ware's *Annals*, as translated into English, there occurs a most gross and, as it appears, wilful misrepresentation of the meaning of the sentences here printed in Italics, which the writer thus shamefully perverts:—"With the consent of the whole clergy it was concluded that God for the sins of the people had afflicted the Irish; and particularly for their selling the English taken by pirates, or otherwise." Of all share in this bare faced falsification, Sir James Ware himself is to be acquitted, being, as Dr. Lanigan justly remarks, "too honest to corrupt his authority." The blame, therefore, of the dishonesty, or the ignorance, whichsoever it may have been, must lie at the door of his translators. The calumny, however, has been adopted, without examination or scruple, by others, and we find Rapin confusedly assigning, as the pretext for Henry's invasion, "the Irish having taken some Englishmen *prisoners*, and afterwards *sold them for slaves.*" Speed, also, who takes the same false view of the subject, adds, in the genuine spirit of misrepresentation, "which made the Irish clergy themselves confess that they had deserved no other than that their land should be transferred to that nation whom they had so cruelly handled."

§ See, for three canons, Ware, *Antiq.* c. 20.

creatures, as an ordinary article of commerce, has also existed; and it was in the course, as we have seen, of a predatory expedition of Nial of the Nine Hostages to the coast of Gaul,* that St. Patrick, then a youth, was carried away and sold as a bond slave in Ireland. Besides the slaves imported from England, of which traffic Bristol was the great mart,† the Irish had also a class of bondmen called Villeins, which were regardant, as the law expresses it, to the manor, and esteemed a part of the inheritance or farm.

In referring to the remarkable synodic decree, just cited, an Irish writer of the seventeenth century,—one of the many whom, at that time, the persecution of their country's creed at home compelled to carry their talents and industry to other shores,—indulges in a wish as deeply significant, as it is melancholy and hopeless. "If, then, the Irish," he says, "as Giraldus intimates, made themselves accomplices in the guilt of the English by buying their children, when offered willingly by them for sale, it were to be wished that the English nation, which reduced the children of those Irish to slavery, contrary to the will and wish of their parents, would in so far imitate the act of the Irish of that period, as to release their posterity, long suffering in servitude, and restore them to their former independence and freedom. For, if the lighter crime drew down on its perpetrators such punishment, how heavy a judgment must fall upon the greater and more lasting wrong!"‡

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Alarm of Henry at the progress of Strongbow.—His proclamation.—Raymond despatched to him with a letter.—Death of the King of Leinster.—Attack upon Dublin by Hasculf.—His defeat and death.—Patriotic exertions of Archbishop Laurence.—Dublin invested by a large army of the Irish.—Negotiation between Strongbow and Roderic.—Intrepid sally of the English.—Retreat of the Irish forces.—Fitz-Stephen besieged at Carrig.—Strongbow marches to relieve him.—Treacherous conduct towards Fitz-Stephen.—Strongbow repairs to England.—Makes his peace with King Henry.—Embarkation of Henry for Ireland.—Receives the submission of several of the Irish Princes.—Holds his court in Dublin.—Synod of Cashel.—Its decrees.—Council held by Henry at Lismore.—Laws enacted by him.—Grants of estates and dignities to Hugh de Lacy and others.—Henry removes to Waterford.—His departure for England.

The open defiance by Strongbow of the mandate of his king, together with the independent course of conquest he was now pursuing, would, even in a prince far less tenacious of his kingly authority than Henry II., have awakened resentment and alarm. It was not to be expected, therefore, that he would any longer brook such encroachments; and the earl, in the midst of his flow of success, found himself checked, at once, by the appearance of an edict of the king, forbidding strictly all traffic and intercourse with Ireland, from any part of his dominions; and commanding all his subjects, now in that country, of every order and degree, to return home before the ensuing feast of Easter, on pain of perpetual banishment and the forfeiture of all their estates. The effects of this measure were soon most embarrassingly felt by Strongbow in the total stoppage of

* See chap. vii., p. 88., of this Work.

† "Slaves," says Seyer, "were exported from England in such numbers that it seems to have been a fashion among the people of property in Ireland, and other neighbouring countries, to be attended by English slaves."—*History of Bristol.* He ought to have added, that it was from his own city, Bristol, these slaves were chiefly, and to so late a period as the reign of king John, exported. William of Malmesbury, who describes the number of young English slaves, of both sexes, who used to be shipped off from Bristol to Ireland, tied together by ropes, attributes to St. Wlstan the credit of having suppressed this unchristian traffic.—"Homines enim ex omni Anglia coemptos majoris spe quæstûs in Hiberniam distrahebant; ancillasque prius ludibrio lecti habitas jamque prægnantes venum proponebant. Videres et gemeres concatenatos funibus, miserorum ordines et utriusque sexus adolescentes."—*De Vit. Wlstani.*

‡ Colgan.—"Sed si Hiberni, ut ipse innuit, fuerint participes delicti Anglorum emendo filios eorum ab ipsis parentibus sponte divenditos, utinam et Angli postea filios Hibernorum contra parentum vota et voluntates in servitutem redigentes, sint imitatores Hibernorum in filios eorum *servitutis vinculo diu mancipatos in pristinam revocando libertatem*, et vereantur ubi delictum levius severe jam punitum est graviori delicto severiorem vindictam aliquando non defecturam."—*Trias Thaumat.* Sept. Append. ad ann. 1170.

his supplies from England, and the desertion of a number of his soldiers and knights; which state of things being ominous of ruin to his future prospects, he consulted the most judicious of those persons about him, as to the steps advisable for him to take, and the result was his sending off Raymond le Gros to the English king, who was then in Normandy, with a letter expressed in the following terms:—

"My sovereign lord, I came into this land, and (if I remember aright) with your permission, for the purpose of aiding in the restoration of your liegeman Dermot Mac Morrough; and, whatsoever the favour of fortune has bestowed upon me, whether from his patrimony or from any other source, as to your gracious munificence I owe it all, so shall it all return to you, and be placed at the disposal of your absolute will and pleasure."

Though this acknowledgment comprised in it all that the king could desire, both pride and policy forbade his yielding too ready a pardon to acts of self-will so dangerous in their example. He did not deign, therefore, even to notice the earl's letter, and Raymond waited some time at his court, expecting an answer, but in vain. In the mean while the assassination of that remarkable man, Thomas à Becket, had drawn down upon Henry, throughout Europe, such a load of suspicion and odium as required all the resources of mind he so eminently possessed, to enable him to confront and overcome; and, accordingly, for a time his views upon Ireland were merged in objects of more deep and pressing interest.

In the state of embarrassment to which the English adventurers were now reduced, they had to suffer another serious blow in the loss of the great projector and patron of their expedition, Dermot himself, who died about the close of this year* at Ferns, of some unknown and frightful malady, which is said to have rendered him in his last moments, an object of horror and disgust. It is added, too, that so dreadful was the state of impenitence in which he departed, that his death combined, at once, all the worst features of moral depravity with the most loathsome form of physical disease. This evidently exaggerated account must be taken as a record, not so much of the real nature of his death, as of the deep and bitter hatred with which he was regarded by most of his contemporaries; the instances being numerous in history, where the mode of death attributed to personages who had rendered themselves odious during their lives, have been rather such as, according to popular feeling, they deserved, than as they actually did suffer.

On the demise of the King of Leinster, the Earl of Pembroke succeeded, in defiance of the law of the land, to the throne of that province, having been raised most probably to the post of Roydamna, by a forced election, during the life-time of the king.† As he had been indebted, however, for much of his following to the personal influence acquired by Dermot over the lower classes, he now, in addition to his other difficulties, found himself deserted by the greater number of those partisans whom only fidelity to the fortunes of his father-in-law had led to range themselves under his banner. With the view of looking after his possessions and adherents in other parts of the country, the earl now left Dublin, and the commanders entrusted with the charge of that city during his absence were soon afforded an opportunity of displaying as well their good fortune as their valour. The late Governor of Dublin, Hasculf, who on its capture, as we have seen, by Strongbow and the King of Leinster, succeeded in escaping to the Orkney Islands, had been able to collect there a large army, as well of Norwegians as of other inhabitants of those isles, with which he now sailed up the Liffey; his armament, consisting of no less than sixty ships, while the troops armed, as we are told, in the Danish manner, wearing coats of mail and round red-coloured shields,‡ were under the special conduct of a chieftain called by his countrymen John the Furious.

* From this last King of Leinster, Dermot Mac-Morrough, descended the family of the O'Cavenaghs, the head of whom, through each successive generation, continued to style himself The Mac-Morrough till the reign of Henry VIII., when, on the submission of the Irish chiefs to Lord Leonard Grey, Charles O'Cavanach surrendered his title to Henry, and was constituted governor, for the king, of the Castle of Ferns. See, for an account of this circumstance, as well as of the title subsequently conferred upon the family, *Hibernia Dominicana*, c. 9., where the author thus cites his authority for the facts:—"Huc porro faciunt sequentia verba quæ nudiustertius vidi in Regesto Feciali Regis Armorum in hac Dublinienai civitate, nempe: Antiquissima familia de O'Cavanah originem ducit a Morrough Rege Lageniæ," &c.

† The explanation of this anomaly given by Mr. Sheffield Grace (in his *Account of Tullyroan*) is as follows:—"Although, in the eyes of the English nation and sovereign, Strongbow was merely regarded as an English noble, holding of their king, yet, in the estimation of the Irish, he was accepted as the King of Leinster, in right of his wife Eva, heiress of that kingdom." But as, by the old Irish law, women themselves were excluded from inheritance, they were also, of course, incapable of communicating a right of inheritance to their husbands.

‡ Hibern. Expugnat. l. 1. c. 21.—"Viri bellicosi Danico more, undique ferro vestiti, alii loricis longis, alii laminis ferreis arte consutis, clypeis quoque rotundis et rubris."

Landing with this force, Hasculf attacked the eastern gate of the city, where, being encountered by Milo de Cogan, he was repulsed with the loss of 500 men. But the Anglo-Norman, flushed with this advantage, and leading his knights in pursuit of the fugitives too eargerly, found himself beset at length by superior numbers,—some of his best men falling around him, while others were, it is said, seized with sudden panic, on seeing the thigh of a knight, which was cased all over in iron, cut off by a Danish chief with a single blow of his battle-axe.* Thus hardly pressed, Milo endeavoured, with his small band, to regain the gate for the purpose of retiring within the walls; but, the besiegers still crowding upon him, he was on the very point of falling beneath their numbers, when his brother, Richard de Cogan, whether from knowledge of his perilous situation, or more probably in pursuance of a pre-arranged plan, issued forth with a body of horse from the southern gate of the city, and coming unobserved on the rear of the assailants, raised a loud shout, and suddenly charged them.† Dismayed by so unexpected an attack, and imagining it to proceed from some newly arrived re-enforcement, the besiegers fled in such headlong terror and confusion, that, in the efforts of all to save themselves, but a small number escaped.

After a long and fierce struggle with his assailants, John the Furious was at length felled to the ground; and an English knight, named Walter de Riddlesford, with the assistance of some others, slew him. Hasculf himself, in flying to his ships, was taken prisoner upon the sands, and brought back alive to be reserved for ransom. On appearing, however, before the governor and a large assembly in the council house, he haughtily exclaimed, "We came here with only a small force, and this has been but the beginning of our labours. If I live, far other and greater things shall follow." More angry at the insolence of this speech than touched by the brave, though rash, spirit which dictated it, the governor ordered the unfortunate chieftain to be immediately beheaded.

Notwithstanding this turn of success, as signal and brilliant as it was fortuitous, which had come thus seasonably to relieve the sinking fortunes of the English, it was clear that the relief could be but superficial and temporary; the small amount of force they could command being dispersed through different garrisons, while the defection of the natives had become almost universal, and all means of supply or re-enforcement from England were interdicted. Under such circumstances, it can hardly be doubted that there wanted but a single combined effort on the part of the Irish, to sweep at once this handful of hardy and desperate adventurers from the face of the land. That there should have arisen, at a crisis so momentous, not even one brave and patriotic Irishman to proclaim aloud to his divided countrymen that in their union alone lay strength and safety, would be a fact which, however disgraceful to the whole nation, might have been in so far consolatory, that it would prove all to have been alike worthy of the ignominious fate that befell them.

But the history of that period is not so utterly unredeemed and desolate, for such a patriot did then exist; and in the pious and high-minded St. Laurence O'Toole, Ireland possessed at that time both a counsellor and leader such as, had there been hearts and swords worthy to second him, might have rescued her from the vile bonds into which she was then sinking. Observing the reduced and straitened condition of the enemy, the archbishop saw with delight that the moment was arrived, when by a prompt and general coalition of his countrymen a blow might be struck to the very heart of the yet infant English power,—a blow that would crush at once the swarm of foreign intruders now on their soil, and hold forth a warning of similar vengeance to all who, in future, might dare to follow in their footsteps. To effect this great national purpose a cordial union of the Irish princes was indispensable, and neither labour nor eloquence was spared by St. Laurence in his noble efforts to accomplish so glorious a result.‡ He went from province to province, to every chieftain of every district, imploring them to forget all trivial animosities at such a crisis, and to rally round their common sovereign for the salvation of their own and their fathers' land. He likewise, in conjunction with Roderic, despatched emissaries to Godfred, King of the Island of Man, as well as to the princes of the neighbouring isles, entreating them, for their own sakes, as having a common interest in the reduction of the English power, to assist with their ships in the general attack which was now meditated upon Dublin.

Informed of these designs, Strongbow threw himself into the city, accompanied by Fitz-

* Regan. By this metrical chronicler the feat here described is attributed to John, the Norwegian chief himself, who bore the cognomen, according to Giraldus, of *Thessceds*, meaning the Mad, or Furious.

† Lambeth MSS.

‡ Laurentio Dubliniensi Antistite, zelo suæ gentis, ut ferebatur, hoc procurante.—*Hib. Expug.* l. 1. c. 32. See Ware, *Annals*, ad ann. 1171.

Gerald and Raymond,—the latter but lately returned from his fruitless mission to Henry,—and though considerably straitened for the maintenance of the army, prepared boldly for defence. Nor was it long before his resolution and means were put to the trial; as a force, far more considerable than he could have expected to see assembled, was now brought to invest his position on every side;—the fleet of the Isles, which consisted of thirty ships, being so stationed as to block up the harbour, while the confederate Irish forces were all encamped around the city, and amounted, according to an estimate most probably exaggerated, to no less than 30,000 men. Among the leaders of this great national force was seen St. Laurence himself,—bearing arms, it is said, like the rest, and endeavouring to animate, by his example and eloquence, the numerous chieftains of all septs and factions, whom he had brought thus together under one banner.

But, encouraging as was all this commencement of the enterprise, the results fell miserably short of the cheering promise which it held forth. Whether from some difficulty in coming to an agreement among themselves, as to the peculiar mode of assault, or probably a persuasion among the majority, that a patient blockade, preventing entirely the introduction of provisions, would be the most secure mode of compelling the garrison to submission, it appears certain that for nearly two months this great besieging force lay wholly inactive before the city. In the desired object, however, of reducing the garrison to the utmost difficulties, the policy adopted was completely successful; and the earl having at length notified a desire to negotiate with the besiegers, the Archbishop of Armagh, as the most worthy representative of all that ought, at least, to have been the feelings of his countrymen at such a crisis, was unanimously deputed to receive his overtures.

The proposition of Strongbow was, that, provided Roderic would raise the siege and consent to receive him as his vassal, he would, on his part, agree to receive the province of Leinster from the monarch, and to acknowledge him as his sovereign. This proposition having been laid before Roderic by the archbishop, an answer was returned, so much more in consonance with the character of the prelate himself than with that of his unworthy master, that it was most probably of his own dictation, in which it was declared that, unless the English would forthwith surrender to Roderic the towns of Dublin, Waterford, and Wexford, together with all the forts and castles then possessed by them, and would agree, on a day assigned, to depart with all their forces from Ireland, the besieging army would without delay attack and storm the city. Taking into account the relative position of the two parties, the garrison being at that moment reduced to extremity, and apparently at the mercy of the besiegers, while the latter were still a fresh unbroken force, there was assuredly nothing in the nature of these terms, however mortifying to the hitherto successful invaders, which the Irish were not justified as well on grounds of equity and mercy to the conquered, as by a sense of duty towards their own aggrieved and insulted country, to demand.* So utterly hopeless was the state of the garrison, that there appeared every prospect of the earl being driven to accept of these terms, or even to surrender at discretion; when, by one of those inspirations of despair which, for the time, invest men with an almost supernatural strength, and enable them to control and conquer fortune itself, the whole complexion of the fortunes of the English were, in a few eventful hours, brightened and changed.

Having eluded, by some means, the vigilance of the enemy, Donald Kavenagh, the son of the late King Dermot, had contrived to enter the city, and acquaint Strongbow with the distressing intelligence, that Fitz-Stephen was now closely besieged in the fort of Carrig, by a large multitude of the people of Wexford and Hy-Kinsellagh,† and that having with him but five knights and a small company of archers, if not relieved within a few days,‡ not merely himself and his followers, but also his wife and children,

* See Leland, who views in the same light the terms proposed on this occasion by the Irish. Dr. Campbell, confounding Leland with Lord Lyttelton, quotes the latter as expressing this opinion respecting the terms, though he has said nothing whatsoever about them.

† "Ecce Duvenaldus Dermitii filius Kenceliæ finibus adveniens, Stephanidem inter Karractense castrum & Guesfordiæ civibus nec non et Kenceliensibus quasi tribus virorum millibus cum paucis obsessum nuntiavit."—*Hib. Expug.* l. i. c. 22. Lord Lyttelton, whose general accuracy in the portion of his history which relates to Ireland, is deserving of the highest praise, has here fallen into a slight geographical error. "Fitz-Stephen," he says, "was besieged in his fort at Carrick, near Wexford, by the citizens of that town and the Irish of *Kinsale*;" thus confounding the sea-port town of this name in the county of Cork with the great territory called Kinsellagh, or Hy-Kinsellagh, which comprehended the chief portion of the southern part of Leinster.

‡ It is stated, in Regan's account, that Fitz-Stephen had still farther weakened his small garrison by contributing thirty-six of his soldiers to the force collected for the defence of Dublin by Strongbow.

As the historical fragment attributed to Regan, the servant and interpreter, as it is pretended, of Dermot, King of Leinster, will be occasionally referred to in these notes, it is right that the reader should know upon what grounds the pretensions of this tract to an authentic character are founded. Of the alleged author, or rather dictator, of this fragment, Maurice Regan, no mention whatever is made in our annals; and the original manuscript preserved at Lambeth, from which Sir George Carew made his translation, instead of

who were shut up with him in the fort, must fall into the hands of the fierce and implacable besiegers. On learning this painful intelligence, the earl summoned without delay a council of war to consult as to the measures that should be pursued; and for some time, all thoughts of their own reduced and desperate condition were forgotten in their anxiety for the fate of Fitz-Stephen and his family. At length, with a courage which could only have arisen out of the very hopelessness of their common lot, Maurice Fitz-Gerald proposed to his comrades, as the only chance now left for their own deliverance, or the relief of his kinsman Fitz-Stephen, that they should at once sally forth with the whole of the garrison, and cut their way through the besieging army.

This bold suggestion the gallant Raymond, with characteristic zeal and eloquence, seconded; and Strongbow, adopting readily the project, selected from the garrison three bodies of horse; the first of which, forming the vanguard, consisted of twenty knights under the conduct of Raymond; while the second, thirty in number, and forming the centre, had for its leader Milo de Cogan, and the third, consisting of about forty knights, under the command of Strongbow himself and Fitz-Gerald, was appointed to bring up the rear. The remainder of the force, which amounted altogether, it is said, to but 600 men, was made up of the esquires of the knights, also on horseback, and of some infantry composed of the citizens of Dublin. With this small band the earl sallied forth, about the ninth hour of the day, to attack an army stated by the English chroniclers to have been no less than 30,000 strong.

In the presumed security of their own numbers and strength, and expecting hourly the surrender of the exhausted garrison, so sudden and vigorous an outbreak from the city was the very last of all possible events that the besieging multitude could have expected. In the terror and confusion, therefore, into which all were thrown by the first onset, their great numbers were but an impediment to effectual resistance; and the panic spreading also to the armies of Irish that were quartered to the north and south of the city, they, in like manner, with scarcely even an attempt at resistance, precipitately broke up their camps and fled. The monarch himself, who was at the time indulging in the luxury of a bath, received the first intimation of what had occurred from the sudden flight of his attendants, and succeeded with difficulty in effecting his own escape. Having thus, notwithstanding the fewness and feebleness of their force, dispersed in a few hours the mighty army that had held them in durance for nearly two months, the English returned at the close of the evening into the city, loaded with the spoils and baggage of the enemy, and having gained sufficient provisions to victual the city for a year.*

The relief of Fitz-Stephen from his alarming position was now the great object to which Strongbow's attention was devoted; and having committed the government of Dublin to Milo de Cogan, he without delay marched towards Wexford, to effect the delivery, if possible, of the fort of the Carrig.† In his way thither the road lay through

being in Irish, as might have been expected, was written in old French or Norman verse, having been taken down, as we are told, in that form by a contemporary and friend of Regan himself. The following are the introductory lines of the Fragment:—

"Parsoen demande Latinner
L'moi conta de sim Historie
Dunt far ici la Memorie
Morice Regan iret celui
Buche a buche par la alui
Ri cest gest endita
Lestorie de lui mi mostra
Jeil Morice iret Latinner
Al rei se Murcher
Ici lira del Bacheller
Del rei Dermod, vous voil conter."

This metrical narrative which comprises a period only of three years, differs, on many essential points, from the accounts given of the same transactions by Giraldus and others; and notwithstanding the emphatic declaration of Harris that "whoever writes the history of Ireland during the English period, must make this piece the main basis of his account," the preference given by almost every writer who has hitherto treated of this period, to the authority of Giraldus over that of the supposed Regan, is a sufficient proof of the doubt entertained of the authenticity of this Fragment. "I cannot think," says Lord Lyttelton, "that this rhyming chronicle, drawn from a verbal relation, imperfectly recollected, and mixed with other hearsays, picked up, we know not how, or from whom, is of equal credit with the history of Giraldus Cambrensis, whose near kinsmen were actors, and principal actors, in most of the facts he relates." Vol. v. note, pp. 70, 71.

The notion of Mr. Whitty (*Popular Hist. of Ireland.*) that this Fragment may have been written by some Norman rhymester, who had accompanied his countrymen into Ireland, seems by no means improbable.

* Hibern. Expugnat. l. 1. c. 22, 23.

† An eloquent Irishman of the present day, in a speech delivered by him some years since, at Wexford, thus alludes to this memorable tower and its history:—"Situate at the gorge of the mountain, and commanding the passage over the stream, whose waters are darkened with its shadow, it is invested with many

a narrow pass, in the territory then called Idrone, where he found himself stopped by O'Regan, the prince of that district, who waited to receive him with a considerable force. An action ensued, which was, for some time, maintained with balanced success, when at length an arrow, shot from the bow of a monk named Nicholas, who fought in the English ranks,* brought the Prince of Idrone to the ground, and his troops, disheartened by the death of their leader, took to flight, and left the English army masters of the field. Among the knights who most distinguished themselves in this action was the young Meyler Fitz-Henry, another of the descendants of the fair Nesta, and nephew of Maurice Fitz-Gerald. A tale is told, but on no other authority, as it appears, than tradition, of a son of Strongbow, a youth of but seventeen years of age, who, making on this occasion his first appearance in a field of battle, was so terrified by the war-cry of the Irish, on advancing to the attack, that he instantly took to flight, and, returning to Dublin in the utmost terror, announced that his father and all the English forces were slain.

Hurrying on from Idrone impatiently to his object, the earl was met at a short distance from Wexford by messengers sent to convey to him the painful intelligence, that the fort he was on his way to relieve had fallen, by an act of the basest treachery, into the hands of the Irish. After repeated and fruitless attacks upon the castle, the besiegers despairing at length of success, had resorted to a stratagem which, if at all fairly represented, must for ever draw down the historian's most unmitigated reprobation on all those persons, lay and clerical, who took part in so base and impious a fraud. In order to inveigle Fitz-Stephen into the surrender of his castle, information was conveyed to him that Roderic and his army had made themselves masters of Dublin; and a parley was proposed for the purpose of satisfying him of the truth and accuracy of this intelligence. With utter disregard as well of religious as of all moral obligations, they brought forward, it is said, at this conference, the Bishops of Wexford and Kildare, who, coming arrayed in their sacred vestments to the brink of the ditch, there took a most solemn oath, upon some relics of saints which they had brought for the purpose, that the Irish were in possession of Dublin; that the whole of the garrison, including the earl himself, Fitz-Gerald and Raymond, were all cut to pieces; and that the monarch was now on his march to Wexford, to extirpate the remains of the English adventurers in that quarter. It was partly out of friendship, as they pretended, to Fitz-Stephen, on account of his mild government of the territory over which he had been placed, that they now communicated to him this information; and, should he think right, while there was yet time for his rescue, to avail himself of their protection, they solemnly promised to convey both himself and his garrison safely to Wales.

Deceived by this gross stratagem, Fitz Stephen surrendered himself into the hands of these perjurers; when instantly the mask they had assumed was thrown off, some of his companions were basely murdered by them, and the remainder, after having been beaten almost to death, were, together with himself, chained and thrown into prison.

Scarcely had this infamous fraud been accomplished, when, to the utter dismay of all the accomplices in it, intelligence reached them that Earl Strongbow, having forced the Irish to raise the siege of Dublin, was advancing with his army to Wexford. Thrown into consternation by this news, they immediately set fire to the town, and taking with them their effects, and all the prisoners they had made at the Carrig, retired to an island, lying off the harbour, called Beg-Erin, or Little Erin.†

On Strongbow's arrival in the neighbourhood of the scene of this transaction, he had to endure the double mortification of at once hearing of the melancholy fate of his friends, and finding himself debarred from even the satisfaction of taking revenge; for, on his

melancholy associations, and imparts to the solemnity of the scene what I may call a picturesque. From the fosse of that tower, memory may take a long and dismal retrospect: . . . . years have flowed by, like the waters which it overshadows, and yet it is not changed. It stands as if it were the work of yesterday; and, as it was the first product of English domination, so it is its type, &c. &c."—*Speech of Mr. Sheil delivered at Wexford, 22d of July*, 1825.

* "We have a sample," says Dr. Lanigan, "of the hopeful kind of ecclesiastics who came over to Ireland with Strongbow and others, in one Nicholas, a monk who fought in their armies. . . . . Such were the missionaries who, according to the wish of Adrian IV., were to establish pure religion and sound ecclesiastical discipline in Ireland."—*Eccles. Hist.* chap. xxix. note 106.

† According to Regan's account, Beckerin (as he calls it) was "a castle situated upon the river Slane."—See Ware, *Antiq.* ch. 6. at *Edri*; also ch. 30., where, in speaking of Beg-Eri, he says, "Perhaps this is the island which Pliny calls *Edros*, and Ptolemy, *Edri*." This island was celebrated for a monastery built upon it by St. Ibar; in reference to which there occurs a passage in the life of St. Abban, another Irish saint, which will be found confirmatory of what I have above stated, as to the extent of the territory anciently called Hy-Kinsellagh. "In famosissimo quondam et sanctissimo monasterio suo quod Beg-Erin, id est, Parva Hibernia vocatur, et situm est ad Australem partem regionis Hua-Kensellach."—Quoted by Usher, *Eccles. Primord. Addend. et Emendand.*

O'Halloran's Irish learning, such as it was, ought to have taught him better than to identify Hy-Kinsellagh in extent with Wexford. "Mac Murchad," he says, (book xlii. ch. 1.,) "was to possess the country of Hy-Cinsellagh, or Wexford."

approach to the town of Wexford, he was met by persons sent from Beg-Eri, to give him warning that, should he attempt to invade or molest that retreat, the heads of all the English prisoners would be cut off and sent to him. As there appeared no means, therefore, of releasing Fitz-Stephen at present, the earl and his companions abandoned their intention of proceeding to Wexford, and "with sorrow in their hearts," says the chronicler, "turned their reins towards Waterford."*

It has been already stated that Raymond le Gros, whom Strongbow had sent with a letter of submission to his royal master, returned to Ireland without any answer from the king. In the intelligence, however, brought by him, there appeared sufficient encouragement to induce the earl to despatch another envoy, and Hervey of Mount-Maurice, his own uncle, was the person selected for this mission. On the earl's arrival now at Waterford, he found this gentleman just landed from England, charged with messages and letters from persons whom he had consulted, all advising him to lose not a moment in presenting himself before the king. This advice Strongbow followed without delay, and, repairing to England, waited upon Henry, who was then at Newnham in Gloucestershire, with a large army in a state of preparation to pass over with him into Ireland. To meet the expenses of this expedition he had levied, from the landed proprietors throughout his dominions, that pecuniary composition, in lieu of personal service, called Escuage, or Scutage; and from the disbursements made for the arms, provision, and shipping of the army, as set forth in the Pipe Roll of the year 1171, still preserved, it would appear that the force raised for the expedition was much more numerous than has been represented by historians.†

Still maintaining his tone of displeasure towards Strongbow, the king refused at first to admit him into his presence; but the loyal readiness evinced by the earl to submit unconditionally to his will, soon smoothed the way to peace, and succeeded in satisfying as well the pride as the self-interest of offended majesty. Through the intervention, accordingly, of Hervey, a reconciliation was easily effected;—the terms agreed upon being, that the earl, renewing his homage and oath of fealty, should surrender to the king the city of Dublin and the adjacent country, together with all the other sea-port towns and forts possessed by him in Ireland; the king, on his part, graciously consenting that all the other Irish possessions of Strongbow should remain in perpetuity to that earl and his heirs, to be held under homage and fealty to the English crown.

At the time of Henry's proclamation against Strongbow, he had also seized on the English estate of that nobleman, as forfeited to the crown by his act of disobedience.‡ The restoration of this property was one of the fruits of the reconcilement now effected; and the whole having been satisfactorily arranged, the king, attended by Strongbow, proceeded, by the Severn-side and western coast of Wales, to Pembroke, where he took up his abode for the short interval during which the ships, for the transport of his army to Ireland, were collecting in Milford Haven. Even here, however, the jealous wakefulness of Henry's fears, with regard to the danger likely to result from Strongbow's example, very strikingly manifested itself; as, during his stay at this time in Wales, he called severely to account all those barons§ who had suffered an expedition, forbidden by himself, to sail unopposed from their coasts; and even punished this proof of disloyalty, as he deemed it, by seizing on the castles of these lords and garrisoning them with his own troops.

The whole armament being now in a state of readiness, the king, having previously performed his devotions in the church of St. David, embarked at Milford, attended by Strongbow, William Fitz-Aldelm, Humphry de Bohen, Hugh de Lacy, Robert Fitz-Barnard, and other lords. His entire force, which was distributed in 400 ships,‖ consisted of 500 knights, and about 4000 men at arms; and, after a prosperous

A. D. 1171.

* "Quibus auditis, non sine magna mentium amaritudine versis in dexteram loris, versus Guaterfordiam iter arripiunt."—*Hibern. Expugnat.* l. 1. c. 28.

† Lynch, *Feudal Dignities, &c.* Some of the smaller payments, as given by this writer from the Pipe Roll (17 Henry II.,) preserved in Somerset House, are not a little curious. Thus we find 26*s.* 2*d.* paid for adorning and gilding the king's swords; 12*l.* 10*s.* for 1000 pounds of wax; 118*s.* 7*d.* for 569 pounds of almonds sent to the king in Ireland; 15*s.* 11*d.* for five carts, bringing the clothes of the king's household from Stafford to Chester, on their way to that country; 10*l.* 7*s.* for spices and electuaries for Josephus Medicus, his majesty's doctor; 4*l.* for one ship carrying the armour, &c. of Robert Poer; 29*l.* 0*s.* 2*d.* for wine bought at Waterford; 9*s.* 8*d.* for the carriage of the king's treasure from Oxford to Winton; 333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* to John the marshal, to carry over to the king in Ireland; and 200*l.* to the king's chamberlain, to bring to his majesty on returning from that country."

‡ *Gulielm Neubrig.*

§ Hibern. Expugnat. lib. i. cap. 29.

‖ "Applicuit in Hibernia cum 400 magnis navibus." Lord Lyttelton makes the number of ships 440; but I know not on what authority. Gervas, Diceto, and Bromton, all agree in the number I have stated.

voyage, he landed at Croch,* a place near Waterford, on St. Luke's day, the 18th of October, A. D. 1171.†

During the whole of these momentous and singular transactions, while a foreign prince was thus dealing with Ireland as with his own rightful property, and affecting to consider as rebels to himself all those minor intruders and depredators, who had but anticipated him by a few months, and on a smaller scale, in that work of usurpation he was now come by wholesale to accomplish,—during all these deliberate arrangements for the utter extinction of an ancient nation's independence, the nation itself was awaiting tamely, and with scarcely even a show of alarm or resistance, the result. As if exhausted, or rather satisfied, with the few feeble and scattered efforts already made by them, the people now heard, without even an attempt to arouse the national spirit, of the mighty preparations in progress to invade their shores, and stood unmoved as if under the influence of some baleful fascination, to allow the collar of political slavery to be slipped quietly round their necks.

One short and unsupported effort was, indeed, ventured upon by the veteran O'Ruarc, who, encouraged by the weakened state of the garrison of Dublin, in consequence of the troops drawn from thence by Strongbow on his departure, raised hastily a force in Ulster and East Connaught, and made a furious assault on the walls of the city. But, as usual, the want of patient coolness and discipline rendered even valour itself of little avail. Just as the Irish were rushing forward to the attack, Milo de Cogan sallied forth unexpectedly from the gates, and charging them, at the head of a small but gallant band, put the whole multitude, with immense slaughter, to rout. With the exception of this one headlong effort, not a single movement appears to have been hazarded against the common enemy, during the whole interval which elapsed between the departure of Strongbow from the country and his return in the train of a foreign sovereign. Nor was it that the habitual warfare of the natives was, in other respects, suspended at this crisis; for, on the contrary, there occur few periods in our history during which its annals are found more crowded with records of civil strife; and a fierce war was actually raging in the heart of Ulster‡ at the very moment when a foreign prince was about to descend upon the shores, and reduce all parties alike to one common level of subjection and vassalage.

Soon after his landing§ at Waterford, the king was waited upon by a deputation of those citizens of Wexford who had been concerned in the atrocious capture of Fitz-Stephen; nor could he have been presented with more genuine specimens of that worst species of Irishmen, at once cruel and servile, tyrants as well as slaves, who were destined in future to render themselves useful as tools of the English power. Making a merit in the eyes of Henry, of their flagitious conduct towards Fitz-Stephen, these citizens brought with them their captive in fetters, like a criminal, and presented him to the king, as "one who had made war without his sovereign's permission in Ireland, and had been thereby the occasion of much enmity and wrong." Though at once fathoming the mean policy of his new courtiers, Henry was resolved not to be behindhand with them in dissimulation, but, affecting sincere indignation against Fitz-Stephen,‖ for "daring to attempt the conquest of Ireland without his leave," he ordered him to be handcuffed and chained, and committed him, as a prisoner of state, to Reginald's Tower.

The design of the king was clearly to impress on the minds of the people that he came rather to protect them from the aggressions of others than to acquire any advantage or possession for himself; and this skilful policy it was, combined with the total want of a united or national spirit among the people themselves, that rendered his progress now, as far as it extended, much more like the visit of an acknowledged sovereign to his own states and subjects than the first descent of a royal invader upon wholly

* Bromton,—"Cum magno gaudio in Hibernia applicuit, in loco qui dicitur *Croch* qui a Waterfordia per octo miliaria distat et ibi nocte remansit." This place is supposed to be the Crook, over against Hook Tower. See Whitelaw's *Hist. of Dublin*. Introduct.

† Doctor Leland has fallen, somewhat strangely, into the error of advancing the date of Henry's arrival to "the October of the year eleven hundred and seventy-two;" a mark of carelessness, unquestionably, but by no means meriting the grave severity with which Dr. O'Connor remarks upon it, as being a false step at the threshold, which inspires distrust in all that follows:—In ipso itaque limine titubantis, et in rebus præcipuis, quid in minutioribus sperandum sit accurate scriptum, quod critico acumine ad trutinam revocatum, viz divinari relinquunt."—*Rer. Hib. Scrip.* tom. 2. cxv. It should be recollected, also, that for the date 1172, Leland has the authority of Giraldus Cambrensis.

‡ Rer. Hib. Script. tom. ii. cxiii. *note*.

§ Hoveden mentions, as a lucky omen, that on Henry's landing a white hare was seen to jump out of a neighbouring hedge. The animal was caught immediately, says the chronicler, and presented to the king "in signum victoriæ."

‖ See Stanihurst (lib. iii.,) who in his usual inflated style, has made the most of this incident. The following may be taken as a specimen of the mock-heroic language which he supposes the king to address to Fitz-Stephen:—"Quare oculorum ardore in rheum contumeliis opertum atque oppressum intuens: quis tu es, inquit, qui hujus reipub. munia sustinere audeas? Nihil præter regiam dignitatem ambitiosum tuum animum satiare poterit? Me doctore, condisces optabilius esse nobis servire, quam alienis imperare."

alien and yet unconquered shores.* After receiving the homage of the King of Desmond, who came forth voluntarily with offers of submission and tribute, Henry advanced, at the head of his army, to Lismore, and from thence, after a sojourn of about two days, proceeded to Cashel, near which, on the banks of the river Suir, he was met by Donald O'Brian,† King of Thomond, who, surrendering to him his city of Limerick, became tributary and swore fealty. Having placed rulers of his own over Cork and Limerick, the king next received the submission of Donchad of Ossory, and O'Faolan of the Desies; and the example of these princes was speedily followed by all the inferior potentates of Munster, each of whom, after a most courteous reception, was dismissed to his territory laden with royal gifts.

From Cashel Henry returned, through Tipperary, to Waterford, where his prisoner Fitz-Stephen being again brought before him, the sight of so brave a man in chains, after the many gallant services performed by him, touched the king's heart with compassion, and, at the intercession of some of his nobles, he readily consented to set him free. Acting on the same principle, however, as in Strongbow's case, he asserted his own right to the possession of Wexford, and annexed that town and the territory belonging to it to his royal demesne in the island. It is satisfactory, too, to learn that some of those base wretches, who, having possessed themselves of Fitz-Stephen by treachery, gave him up as a tribute of servility to a new master, suffered, themselves the ignominious death they so richly deserved.

After remaining for a short time at Waterford, the king marched to Dublin,—a city which from the extent of its commerce, had risen at that time, to such importance, as to have become, according to an old English chronicler, the rival of London.‡ Here he was joyfully, we are told, received by the inhabitants; while all the neighbouring lords and chieftains hasten to proffer their allegiance; and among the rest O'Ruarc of Breffny, so long the liegeman of Roderic, now joined in the train of the English sovereign,§ and became his tributary and vassal. In the midst of this general defection, the monarch Roderic himself,—an object, for the first time in his life, of sympathy and respect,—having collected together his provincial troops, and taken up a position on the banks of the Shannon, appeared disposed for a time to follow the example of the hardy Ultonians, and to make a last stand for the independence of the nation. This show of resistance, however, was not of long duration; as, shortly after, he consented to meet, on the borders of his Connaught kingdoms, Hugh de Lacy and William Fitz-Aldelm, the persons empowered to receive his act of homage, and treat of the tribute he was to pay. These preliminary matters having been arranged, peace was declared between the two sovereigns.

The festival of Christmas being now at hand, the English king, who was no less knowingly practised in all the lesser and lighter policy of his station, than in the deeper

* It has been stated by Bromton, by the abbot of Peterborough, and by others, that all the archbishops and bishops of Ireland waited upon Henry on his arrival, and not only tendered their own obedience, but gave him letters with their seals attached ("literas," says Bromton, "cum sigillis suis in modum cartæ pendentibus,") confirming to him and his heirs the sovereignty over Ireland for ever. But there is not the slightest foundation for this story, of which neither Giraldus nor any of our Irish authorities say a single word. A still more glaring mistake respecting the history of this period has been fallen into by Camden, who supposes a meeting of the states of Ireland to have taken place on Henry's arrival, at which Roderic O'Connor and most of the other princes attended, and there made over to him, by charters signed and delivered, their whole power and authority; in consequence of which, as he states, Pope Adrian invested Henry with the sovereignty of that kingdom. It need hardly be added, that no such proceeding of the states occurred, and that the grant to Henry, by the pope, of the sovereignty of Ireland, had taken place near sixteen years before.

† This brave but unprincipled chieftain was one of the first, according to the *Munster Annals*, cited by Vallancey, who availed himself of the alliance of the new comers in making war against his own countrymen. In the year 1170 he fought several battles against Roderic, assisted by the forces of Fitz-Stephen; in 1171, he paid homage and delivered hostages to the same prince; and, in a few months after, as we see, swore homage and allegiance to Henry II.

‡ "Divelinum, urbem maritimam, totius Hiberniæ Metropolim, portuque celeberrimo in commercilis et commeatibus nostrarum æmulam Lundoniarum."—*Guliel. Neubrig. Rerum Angl.* l. 2. xxvi.

§ Adverting to the "vain and ridiculous parade" as he describes it, "of English writers" respecting Henry, O'Halloran says,—"We are told that his army proceeded in slow and solemn marches throughout the country, in order to strike the rude inhabitants with the splendour and magnificence of their procession; and we have been already entertained with the terror which the appearance of Fitz-Stephen and his armed forces impressed on the natives, who had never beheld the like! Assertions of this kind might indeed appear plausible, had this people dwelt on the other side of the Atlantic; but, when a brave and polished people were the subjects, the futility of the assertion diverts our thoughts from choler and contempt. The reader has been already sufficiently acquainted with the distinguished figure which the Irish nation cut in arts and arms: he has heard how remarkably attentive they were to the article of their armour; that their corslets and head-pieces were ornamented with gold; that the handles of their swords were of the same metal; and the shields of the knights and of the nobility were mostly of pure silver: he has been informed that their heavy-armed infantry were cased in armour from head to foot; and he must be convinced that the equestrian orders among the Celtæ of Europe originated from hence."—Book xiii. chap. 2.

Could any thing add to the feeling of melancholy and shame with which this sad period of our history is contemplated, it would be assuredly the pompous vapour thus thrown around it by such weak and vaunting historians as O'Halloran.

and more important, proposed to celebrate that festive season in the metropolis of his new kingdom, with all the state which the limited resources of his present situation would permit; and, as the city afforded no building sufficiently large to contain his numerous court, a large pavilion was raised temporarily without the walls, constructed of smoothed twigs, or wattles, according to the Irish fashion;* and here the guests, both English and native, were feasted with sumptuous hospitality. The Irish princes and nobles, present on this occasion, appear to have come but as curious spectators of the feast: till, being invited by the king to join in the Christmas cheer, they took their places at the royal board, and were, it is said, struck with admiration both at "the plenty of the English table and the goodly courtesy of the attendants."†

A. D. 1172. Early in the year 1172 a synod was held, by the order of Henry, at Cashel, concerning the acts of which there has been handed down, from historian to historian, much of ignorant, and, in some instances, wilful misrepresentation. It will be recollected that the principle object which Adrian professed to have at heart in bestowing the sovereignty of Ireland on the English monarch, was the reformation of the alleged abuses of the Church of that realm, for which he looked to the pious efforts of its new sovereign; and, the synod now held being meant as a redemption of this pledge, it is obvious that as strong a case would be made out against the Irish Church as could decently be hazarded, for the purpose both of justifying the grounds or pretext upon which the pope had acted, and enhancing the merit of his royal vicegerent in performing effectually so urgent and arduous a task. With all these pretences, however, of reformation, it will be seen in the following decrees,—the most important of all those passed by the synod,—how insignificant, after all, was the amount of reform which it appeared the Irish Church wanted, and to obtain which was the pretended object of Adrian's grant of Ireland to the English king.

It was decreed, "1. That all the faithful throughout Ireland should contract and observe lawful marriages, rejecting those with their relations, either by consanguinity or affinity. 2. That infants should be catechized before the doors of the Church, and baptized in the holy font in the baptismal churches. 3. That all the faithful should pay the tithe of animals, corn, and other produce to the church of which they are parishioners. 4. That all ecclesiastical lands, and property connected with them, be quite exempt from the exactions of all laymen. And especially, that neither the petty kings, nor counts, nor any powerful men in Ireland, nor their sons with their families, should exact, as was usual, victuals and hospitality, or entertainments, in the ecclesiastical districts, or presume to extort them by force; and that the detestable food or contributions which used to be required four times in the year, by the neighbouring counts, from farms belonging to the churches, should not be claimed any more."

These, and one or two other such regulations,‡ having no reference whatever to religious dogmas, to matters of faith, or even to points of essential discipline, comprise the whole of the wonderful reforms, for which a kingdom was not thought too costly a price; and, in speaking of which, a court-flatterer of those times says, "It was worthy and just that Ireland should receive a better form of living from England, seeing that to its magnanimous king she entirely owed whatever advantages she enjoyed both as to church and state, and that the manifold abuses which had prevailed in the country, had, since his coming, fallen into disuse."§

* "Ibi fecit sibi construi palatium regium miro artificio de virgis levigatis ad modum patriæ illius constructum, in quo ipse cum Regibus et principibus Hiberniæ festum solemne tenuit die Natali Domini."—*Hoveden.*

† "Dubliniam terræ illius principes ad Curiam videndam accessere quam plurimi. Ubi et lautam Anglicanæ mensæ copiam venustissimum quoque verna obsequium plurimum admirantes." It is also mentioned by the chronicler that, at Henry's desire, they were induced to partake of some crane's flesh,—a food which, till then, it seems, they had always held in abhorrence.—"Carne gruina quam hactenus abhorruerant, regia voluntate passim per aulam vesci ceperunt."—*Hibern. Expug.* l. i. c. 32.

‡ Among these there is one regulating the testamentary disposal of property, the chief provision of which is as follows:—"That all the faithful lying in sickness do, in the presence of their confessor and neighbours, make their will with due solemnity, dividing, in case they have wives and children (their own debts and servants' wages being excepted,) all their moveable goods into three parts, and bequeathing one for the children another for the lawful wife, and a third for the funeral obsequies."

§ *Hibern. Expug.* l. i. c. 34.—The whole of this passage, which clearly, on the face of it, is nothing more than a laudatory comment annexed by Giraldus to his report of the proceedings of the synod, is strangely represented, both by Lord Lyttelton and Leland, as the language of the synod itself,—a comment of that body on their own acts, and a tribute of flattery to their royal master. This mistake, which, in two such writers, was clearly not wilful, can only be accounted for by their having relied too much upon Hookers translation, in which the passage is made to assume an appearance of the import they have given to it: and that such was the source of their mistake appears the more probable from their having also followed Hooker in a mistranslation made by him, not without design, of a passage which soon after follows. Giraldus, still speaking in his own person, remarks, that the manifold abuses which had prevailed in the church previously to Henry's coming, had now gone into disuse—"in desuetudinem abiêre." But to say that the synod had met but for the purpose of abolishing abuses which had already gone into disuse, would have appeared, of

As neither in the nature nor in the extent of the few abuses which the synod of Cashel professed to rectify, is there found any thing to justify this pompous vaunt, succeeding writers have endeavoured to prop the misrepresentation by invention,—alleging that the decree relative to marriage, which regarded really only the degrees of consanguinity within which it was lawful to marry (and which were extended to an unusually rigorous point in Ireland,*)was enacted in consequence of the prevalence of polygamy† among the Irish.

According to the same veracious authorities, the decree relating to baptism had for its object to put down a practice also common, as they allege, among the richer natives, of baptizing their new-born infants in milk.‡ For neither of these often repeated assertions does there appear to have been the least foundation in truth.

In addition to the decree of this synod, above-mentioned, exempting lands and other property belonging to the Church from all impositions exacted by the laity, there was also another relieving the clergy from any share in the payment of the *eric*, or blood-fine, which the kindred of a layman, convicted of homicide, were compelled to pay among them to the family of the slain; and the extension of such favours and immunities to the Church, though by no means in accordance with Henry's general policy, appeared to him an expedient necessary to be adopted in Ireland, where the support of a strong party among the natives, was indispensable towards the establishment of his power; and the great influence gained by the clergy, over all ranks, rendered them the most useful and legitimate instruments he could employ. From the same motive, doubtless, the payment of tithes, which the Irish had never, during their unreformed state, observed, was now enjoined by Henry's council, with a hope that they would serve as a lasting bribe to the Church. But the people of this country were as little disposed to adopt new observances as to forget or surrender the old; and accordingly, when Cambrensis visited Ireland, several years after the date of this synod, he found marriages within the seven prohibited degrees still practised, and tithes still unpaid.

Besides this synod, which was employed almost wholly upon ecclesiastical affairs, there is stated to have been also held by Henry, a council, or parliament, at Lismore, in which "the laws of England were gratefully accepted by all present, and, under the sanction of a solemn oath, established."§ It is by no means improbable that, among the acts of authority exercised by him, while in Ireland, he may have, more than once, held what was called a "Curia Regis," or Council of the Realm, for the purpose of conferring with his prelates and magnates on the important matters in which he was engaged. But to apply to a council of this kind the name of "parliament," is, if not an anachronism in language, at least a use of the term calculated to mislead;‖ as that form of legislative council to which we, at present, give the name of Parliament, did not develope itself, however long its rudiments may have been in existence, for more than a hundred years after this period.

With regard to the important act of policy which is said to have arisen out of the deliberations at Lismore,—that of communicating to Ireland the laws and usages of England,—a very false notion has been entertained by some writers, who, taking for granted that, under the head of "Ireland," the natives themselves must have been included, conceive the Irish to have been equally sharers in the benefit of this transaction,

course, ridiculous. In order, therefore, to accommodate the meaning of the passage to the supposition of its having formed a part of the synod's decrees, the words "in desuetudinem abiére" have been rendered by Hooker, "are now abolished;" and in this mistranslation both Lord Lyttelton and Leland have, without reference to the original, followed him.

In Wilkins's *Concilia*, as well as in the account of the synod, by Lanigan (chap. xxix. note 12.) the Acts of the synod and Giraldus's comment upon them are kept correctly distinct.

* While the Church, in general, did not extend the prohibition of marriage beyond the fourth degree of consanguinity, the canons of the Irish Church would not, for a long time, allow of marriage within the seventh. Thus, in the treatise *de Statu Ecclesiæ*, preserved by Usher, it is said, "Conjugatorum est, nullam usque in sextam, vel etiam septimam progeniem sanguine sibi conjunctam, aut illi quam habuerit aut quam habuit proximas, vel commatrem ducere uxorem."—*Vet. Epist. Hibern. Syllage.* Ep. xxx.

† The chronicler Bromton even goes so far as, on the strength solely of this decree, to accuse the Irish of marrying their sisters:—"Plerique enim, illorum quot uxores volebant tot habebant; et etiam cognatas suas et germanas habere solebant uxores."

‡ After stating that, in the whole course of his inquiries into the religious practices of the Irish, he found no instance of this sort of baptism, Dr. Lanigan adds, that "perhaps the notion of baptizing in milk was taken from the Irish having probably retained the ancient practice of giving milk to the newly baptized, which, as those ignorant calumniators did not understand the meaning of it, they changed into actual baptism in milk."—Chap. xxix. § 4.

§ "Sed rex pater, antequam ab Hybernia rediret apud Lissemor Concilium congregavit, ubi leges Anglie ab omnibus sunt gratanter receptæ, et, juratoria cautione prestita confirmate.—*Matth. Paris.*

In reference to this council, held by Henry, at Lismore, Mr. Shaw Mason mentions, as rather a curious circumstance, that—"the duke of Rutland, when viceroy, called a privy council at the castle of Lismore, and issued proclamations from it."—*Parochial Survey.*

‖ The question with respect to the "Modus tenendi Parliamentum" said to have been sent into Ireland by Henry II., I shall have, at a later period, a more fit opportunity of considering.

and to have received thankfully the substitution of the laws of England for their own.* But such was by no means the real nature of this legislative act of the king, the sole object of which was to insure to his English subjects, settling in Ireland, the continued enjoyment of the laws and usages of that country from whence they had sprung, in return for their continued allegiance to him and his heirs in the new territories which they had adopted.

So far was Henry, indeed, from wishing to innovate on the ancient laws of the land, that in the synod held, as we have seen, at Cashel, under his authority, a direct sanction was tacitly given to some of the most inveterate of those old Irish abuses of which so much is heard in the subsequent history of the country. For it is clear, that, in exempting specially the body of the clergy from Coyn,† Cosbering, the payment of Eric, and other such exactions, that synod left these old laws and customs still in full force, as regarded the laity. We shall find, as we proceed, that the attachment to traditional usages and observances which so strongly characterized the native Irish, was by them communicated, together with many other features of the national character, to the descendants of the foreigners who had settled among them; insomuch, that the spirit of English legislation has been forced to accommodate itself to this jealous reverence of the past;‡ and, throughout the statutes and ordinances extended to Ireland, exceptions in favour of the old usages and customs of the land will be found of very frequent occurrence. Even in the Magna Charta, as extended to this country, a recognition of its old laws and usages is to be traced;—a number of minute differences being discoverable between the English and Irish charters, all referrible to the over-ruling force of the customs of ancient Ireland, before which even the legislation of her foreign masters was compelled to bow. So far was this deference, indeed, carried, that in the few instances which occur in later times, of the grant of dignities to native chieftains, it was thought expedient, in consequence of the ancient Irish law of succession, according to which honours and possessions did not descend hereditarily, but by election, to confer such dignities only during life.§

Among the enactments of the king and his council, at this time, was one known, at a later period, as the statute of Henry Fitz-Empress, by which it was provided, that, in case of the death of any chief governor, the chancellor, treasurer, chief-justices, and certain other officers should be empowered, with the assent of the lords spiritual and temporal, to proceed to the election of a successor to that office.

It is almost superfluous to observe that, in all the laws and ordinances enacted by Henry, during his brief stay in Ireland,‖ for the foundation and future government of the new settlement, he was guided wholly by the spirit and principles of the feudal polity according to which the great body of the English laws was at that time modelled. Thus the estates and dignities conferred by him upon his officers, who had been already most of them tenants *in capite* from the crown, were granted on consideration of homage and fealty, and of military or honorary services to be rendered to himself and his heirs. Of such importance did he conceive the general acceptance of this system, and of the duties, services, and conditions enforced by it, that, even in the instance of Strongbow, who, as we have seen, acquired, by his marriage with Eva, the principality of Leinster, it was imperatively required, that he should resign the possession of that estate, and accept a new grant of it from the king, subject to the feudal conditions of homage and military service. With the view, too, of balancing the weight of so powerful a vassal, he granted by charter to Hugh de Lacy, whom he had appointed Justiciary of Ireland, the seignory of the land of Meath, to be held of him and his heirs by the service of fifty knights.

* Thus Lord Lyttelton:—"It is reasonable to infer that a reformation had been made, not only in the spiritual, but civil, state of Ireland, before this time (the time of the synod of Cashel,) by giving the Irish a better constitution of government, and a better rule of life and action than their barbarous Brehon law. Accordingly we are told by Matthew Paris, that a council, or parliament," &c.; and again:—"However, this may have been, the communicating to Ireland the laws and customs of England was unquestionably a great boon to the people of that country, and a most wise act of policy in the king who did it."—Book iv.

It is rather singular that a notion, so wholly at variance with all subsequent facts, should have acquired so wide a currency. See Ware, who adopts the same false view. Even Mr. O'Connor (*Dissert. sect.* 20.) understands the result of the council at Lismore to have been "a grant of the laws and constitution of England to the Irish,"—a conclusion in which he is followed, almost verbally, by Plowden.—*Hist. Review.*

† Called by the Irish themselves, *Bonaght.* "This extortion (says Sir John Davies) was originally Irish; for they used to lay Bonaght upon their people, and never gave their soldiers any other pay."—*Hist. Discov.*

‡ See Lynch's *View of the Legal Institutions, &c.*, in which several of these variances in the two charters are pointed out.

§ A remarkable instance of this sort of compliance with the spirit of the ancient law of Ireland is found in the reign of queen Mary, when Kavenagh, a descendant of the kings of Leinster, was created a peer, by the title of baron Balyane, but still, in conformity with the old Irish custom, was, by the same patent, nominated captain of his sept, or nation; and, as such, was permitted to have a body-guard of hobbies (horse) and kerns, or infantry.

‖ To Henry is attributed, by Leland and others, the credit of having caused the territories subject to him to be divided into shires, or counties; as well as of appointing therein sheriffs and other officers, according to the English model. But it was clearly in John's reign that these institutions were for the first time introduced into Ireland.

With respect to Meath, we have already seen that the Irish monarch, Roderic O'Connor, having taken forcible possession of this territory, which belonged, hereditarily, to the princes of the house of Melachlin, had appointed his trusty liegeman, O'Ruarc, to be the temporary ruler of East Meath, retaining the western parts of the province in his own hands. Following but too closely this flagrant example of usurpation, Henry granted the same territory to one of his own followers; and thus, with a disregard to the national feelings as impolitic as it was unjust, left to remain as a standing insult in the eyes of succeeding generations, the spectacle of an English lord holding possession of the ancient patrimony of the kings of Tara.*

The territory thus transferred to Hugh de Lacy contained, as it appears, about 800,000 acres; and the baron himself, and his family after him, held their courts, therein with an extent of jurisdiction and cognizance of pleas which, as trenching upon the rights of the crown, it was found, at a subsequent period, necessary to repress. It seems to have been also soon after the arrival of Henry that large possessions in the counties of Limerick, Cork, and Kerry were granted to the ancestors of the earl of Desmond.†

There was yet another source of honour and wealth of which the politic king adroitly availed himself, as well for the reward of his most active chiefs, as for the establishment in his new kingdom of a feudal nobility attached hereditarily to the crown by oath of fealty and honorary services; and this was the introduction into Ireland of the various high offices of constable, marshal, seneschal, and other such hereditary dignities, which had been attached to the king's court in England from the time of the Norman conquest. On the favoured Hugh de Lacy the office of lord constable was bestowed,‡ while the dignity of lord marshal is supposed to have been borne by Strongbow; and either during the king's stay in Ireland, or some time after the office of high steward, or seneschal, was conferred upon Sir Bertram de Vernon.

Among the ancient honorary offices of the court, both in France and England, none stood higher in rank or estimation than the "Pincerna Regis," or king's butler,—an officer who, in the former country, even disputed the precedency of the constable of France.§ On Theobald Walter, the ancestor of the earls of Ormonde, this high dignity was conferred by Henry soon after 1170, and from a motive, it is said, which somewhat enhances the interest and memorableness of the event. Desirous of relieving his character from the weight of odium which the fate of Becket had drawn down upon it, the king availed himself at this time of every opportunity of conferring wealth and honours upon the relatives of that prelate;‖ and it is supposed that to the circumstance of their being descended from the sister of Thomas à Becket, the family of Le Boteler were chiefly indebted for the high dignities they enjoyed.

Early in February 1172, the king removed from Dublin to Waterford, having left Hugh de Lacy his governor of the former city, with a guard of twenty knights, assisted by Maurice Fitz-Gerald and Robert Fitz-Stephen, with a similar train. During the whole of the winter months so remarkably tempestuous had been the weather, that all communication with the coasts of England was interrupted; and, the continued storms preventing the arrival of intelligence from his other dominions, the mind of the king was kept in a constant state of suspense. At length about the middle of Lent, there arrived couriers from the continent with alarming intelligence, to the effect that the Cardinals Albert and Theodine, who had been sent into Normandy to investigate the circumstances of Becket's death, had summoned Henry to appear before them, threatening, in the event of his not soon presenting himself, to lay all his kingdom under an interdict.¶

He had intended, with a view of the subjection of Roderic, to defer his departure to

* "The transferring an ancient kingdom of Ireland from the present Irish possessors, and from every branch of that race which could legally claim the inheritance of it, to an English lord and his heirs, was a measure which the nation would not easily approve, or even forgive."—*Lord Lyttelton*, book iv.

† "One of the territories thus obtained by them was a district now called the barony of Connal, or Connelloe, in the county of Limerick, containing upwards of 100,000 acres of land; and this tract, which in ancient documents is called "Okonayl" and "Ogonneloe," was ceded to them by the native family, or sept, of O'Connel, in consideration of lands assigned them in the counties of Kerry and Clare, where branches of that family continue to the present day."—*Lynch.*

‡ In the year 1185 he witnessed, as Constable of Ireland, prince John's charter to the abbey of "*Valle Salutis*," as well as several other charters executed in that reign.—Lynch, *Feudal Dignities.*

§ A still more lofty notion may be formed of the honour attached to this office from the circumstance of Henry himself having attended on his son, as chief butler, at that prince's coronation.

‖ "He hoped," says Camden, "to redeem his credit in the world by preferring the relations of Thomas Becket to wealth and honours."

According to Carte and Lodge, the butlership was not conferred upon Theobald Walter till the year 1177, a lapse of time which seems to lessen a good deal the probability of the favour having originated in a feeling of the king respecting Becket.

¶ For the tremendous consequences of a sentence of interdict, see Hume chap. 11.

the following summer;* and, though it be now but an idle and melancholy speculation, to consider how far, under other circumstances, the fortunes of Ireland might have been more prosperous, we cannot but regret that he was so soon interrupted in the task of providing for her future settlement and government; as there can hardly be a doubt that, at such a crisis, when so much was to be instituted and originated on which not only the well-being of the new colony itself, but also of its acceptance with the mass of the natives, would depend, the direct and continuous application of a mind like Henry's to the task, would have presented the best, if not perhaps sole, chance of an ultimately prosperous result, which a work, in any hands so delicate and difficult, could have been expected to afford. This chance, unluckily, the necessity of his immediate departure for ever foreclosed. To effect good would have required time, and the immediate superintendence of his own mind and eye; whereas mischief was a work more rapid in its accomplishment, and admitting more easily of being delegated. On the ready instruments he left behind him now devolved the too sure accomplishment of this task;—his prodigal grants to his English followers and their creatures having established in the land an oligarchy of enriched upstarts who could not prove otherwise than a scourge and curse to the doomed people whom he now delivered into their hands.

Though for the administration and security of the countries ceded to the crown he had made every requisite provision, the whole of Ulster still remained independent; and this one great exception to the recognition of his dominion must, he knew, endanger, as long as it lasted, the security of all the rest. How summarily, however, he was disposed to deal with what he considered to be his own property, appears from the charter granted by him, soon after he had taken possession of Dublin, giving that city to the inhabitants of Bristol, "to be held of him and his heirs, fully and honourably, with all the same liberties and free customs which they enjoyed at Bristol and throughout his land."† The city of Waterford he gave in charge to Humphrey de Bohun, while Wexford was committed by him to William Fitz-Aldelm; the former officer having under him Robert Fitz-Bernard and Hugh de Gundeville, with a company of twenty knights, and the latter Philip de Hastings and Philip de Breuse, with a similar guard. He likewise left orders that castles should be built, with all possible expedition, in both these towns.

A. D. 1172. The urgent affairs that called him to England not admitting of any farther delay, the king ordered his troops to Waterford, where his fleet was then lying, and setting sail, himself, from Wexford, on Easter Monday, which fell on the 17th of April, arrived the same day, at Portfinnan, in Wales. Here, the lord of so many kingdoms assumed on landing the staff of the pilgrim, and, with pious humility, proceeded on foot to the church of St. David, where he was met at the White Gate by a procession of the clergy, coming forth to receive him with solemn honours.‡

The conclusion that already has suggested itself, on merely speculatively considering how far the results might have proved more prosperous had Henry been able to devote more time to his new kingdom, is borne out practically by the actual effects of his presence during the six months which he passed in the country; for, whether owing to the imposing influence of his name, or to the hopes that generally wait on a new and untried reign, so long and unbroken an interval of peace as Ireland enjoyed during that time is hardly to be found at any other period of her annals.

* Benedict, abbot of Peterborough, referring to the arrival of the cardinals, says,—"Nisi eorum adventus eum impedisset, proposuit in proxima sequenti æstate ire cum exercitu suo ad subjiciendum sibi regem Cognatensem qui ad eum venire nolebat."

† "Sciatis me dedisse et concessisse et presenti charta confirmasse hominibus meis de Bristow civitatem meam de Divelin, ad inhabitandum. Quare volo et firmiter præcipio ut ipsi eam inhabitent et teneant illam de me et heredibus meis bene et in pace," &c. A fac-simile of this curious charter, taken from the original, preserved in the archives of Dublin, may be found in the *History of Bristol*, by Seyer, who in explanation of the meaning of the grant, quotes a passage from Camden, stating that an English colony had been transplanted by Henry from Bristol to Dublin, which latter city was, it is supposed, drained at that time of inhabitants.

‡ "Accedens itaque Meneviam devoto peregrinantium more pedes baculoque infultus, canonicorum ecclesiæ processione ipsum debita reverentia et honore suscipientium, apud Albam Portam obviam venit.—*Hib. Expug.* c 37.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Conference of De Lacy with O'Ruarc.—Death of O'Ruarc.—Marriage and death of De Quincy.—Strongbow summoned to attend the king of France.—Rivalry between Hervey and Raymond.—Strongbow returns to Ireland.—Raymond's popularity and success.—Retires in discontent to Wales.—Strongbow defeated by the Irish.—Raymond is recalled.—His marriage with Basilia, the Earl's sister.—Meath overrun and despoiled by Roderic.—His retreat.—Limerick taken.—Bull of Adrian promulgated.—Raymond's successes.—Treaty between Henry and Roderic.

THE apparent calm produced by Henry survived but a short time his departure. The seeds of discontent so abundantly sown throughout the country, by the many unjust usurpations on the property of the natives which the king's grants to his lords and followers had occasioned, were quickly matured into a general feeling of hostility, which every succeeding year but rendered more bitter and deep. The grant of the whole of the principality of Meath to De Lacy was one of those encroachments on the right of the Irish to their own soil, which, though rendered familiar afterwards by repetition, must have been then as astounding from their audacity, as they were irritating, and at last infuriating, from their injustice. O'Ruarc, the party immediately grieved by this spoliation,* having, on the departure of the king, appealed to Hugh De Lacy for redress, it was agreed that a conference should be held on the points at issue between them, and a day and place were appointed for that purpose. A. D. 1172.

Accompanied on each side by a stipulated number of attendants, they met at a place called O'Ruarc's Hill, or, according to other accounts, the Hill of Tara, near Dublin; and, oaths and sureties having been mutually given, the two chiefs, unarmed and apart from all the rest, held their conference together, on the top of the hill, assisted but by one unarmed interpreter. While they were thus occupied, the soldiers who had accompanied O'Ruarc remained in the valley, at a little distance; while a small band of about seven or eight knights, who under the command of Gryffyth, the nephew of Maurice Fitz-Gerald, formed part of the guard of De Lacy, had ascended the hill ready mounted and armed with their shields and lances, for the purpose of being near the place of conference,—having reason to apprehend treachery on the part of O'Ruarc. In order to appear as if solely bent upon pastime, this young troop continued all the time to tilt at each other, as in the tournaments of their own country, occasionally wheeling around the spot where the two chieftains stood.

Their apprehensions, which are ascribed by the chronicler to a warning dream that had appeared to Gryffyth, on the preceding night, proved not to have been without foundation. Whether by a preconcerted design, or, as appears more probable, in the irritation of the moment, O'Ruarc retiring, under some pretence, to the brow of the hill, made a signal to his soldiers in the valley to join him, and then returned towards De Lacy. But Maurice Fitz-Gerald, who, remembering his nephew's dream, had observed watchfully the movements of the Irish chief, now seeing him advance with pale visage and hurried strides, holding an axe uplifted threateningly in his hand,† instantly drew his sword, and calling out to De Lacy to save himself, rushed forward in his defence. Before, however, he could reach the spot, O'Ruarc had aimed a blow at the English lord, which the interpreter, rushing in bravely between them, caught on his own arm, and fell mortally wounded. Twice did De Lacy fall in endeavouring to escape;‡ and was only saved by

* The abbé Geoghegan, with the view of making out a stronger case against the English—as if the story of their wrongs towards Ireland needed aid from the colouring of fiction—has, in place of O'Ruarc, who was himself a usurper of the dominion of Meath, taken upon him to substitute, without any authority, O'Melachlin, the hereditary chief of that territory, as having been the prince thus robbed of his kingdom to enrich an English lord.—"O'Melaghlin, prince héréditaire de la Midie, pénétré de douleur à la vue des hostilités qu'on venoit d'exercer dans son pays natal," &c.—*Hist. d'Irlande*, troisième part. chap. 1.

† No decisive conclusion as to his hostile intentions could fairly be drawn from this circumstance, it being the custom of the Irish, in those times, according to Giraldus, to carry an axe in the hand, wherever they went, as familiarly as a walking-stick:—"Semper in manu quasi pro baculo securim baiulant." He then puts, in his usual style, on this formidable habit:—"A securibus itaque nulla securitas: si securum te reputes securine senties. Te spontein periculum mittis: si securim admittis, et securitatem amittis." *Topog.* Dist. 3., c. 21.

‡ "Ob fugæ maturationem Hugo de Lacy bis retro cadens." Stanihurst, in his English zeal, suppresses altogether De Lacy's endeavour to escape; and the English translator of Giraldus thus colours it over:—"In which skirmishing Hugh de Lacie was twice felled to the ground."

the valour of Fitz-Gerald, who opposed his sword to the axe of the Irish prince. Mean while Gryffyth, with his troop of knights, having been summoned to the spot by the shout of his gallant kinsman, arrived at the same moment with the band of infantry which O'Ruarc had c lled up out of the valley. Seeing these well-appointed horsemen, and feari g that his infantry would be unable to stand their onset, the Irish prince endeavoured to escape by mounting a horse which some of his attendants had brought to him. But while in the very act of mounting, both himself and his horse were pierced through by one violent thrust of Gryffyth's lance, and fell dead together. The three attendants also, who, in the face of such dangers, had endeavoured to aid his escape, were cut down on the spot; and the rest of his followers, flying dispersed in every direction, were most of them taken and slaughtered.

The corpse of O'Ruarc himself was beheaded, the body buried with the heels upwards, and the head, after hanging some time over one of the gates of Dublin was sent into England to the king. This insulting treatment of the remains of one of their most popular princes was to the Irish even more galling than the wrong previously inflicted upon him; as it showed that even to remonstrate against injustice was by their new masters accounted an unpardonable and ignominious crime. In the chance conflict which led to his death,—even judging from the account given of it by one of the most prejudiced of chroniclers,—it would surely be difficult to assert that the blame of originating the fray was not fully as much imputable to the English as to the Irish. The great and sole crime, therefore, of O'Ruarc was that he, a native prince, holding from the monarch of his own country a large territory by gift, had dared to question the right of an intrusive foreign king to deprive him of his territory and bestow it upon one of his own subjects.

On the departure of the king for England, Strongbow took up his abode at Ferns, the ancient residence of the Lienster kings, and there celebrated the marriage of his daughter with Robert De Quincy, giving as her dowry the territory of the Duffreys in the county of Wexford, and, soon after appointing her husband to the high office of constable and standard-bearer of Lienster. His son-in-law's tenure, however, of these civil and military honours,* was but of very short duration. In consequence of the refusal of O'Dempsey O'Fally, a lord of Lienster, to attend his court, Strongbow marched a body of troops into that chieftain's territory, and, finding his progress unresisted, spread desolation wherever he went. On his returning, however, laden with booty, towards Kildare, just after the vanguard commanded by himself had passed through a defile which lay in their way, O'Dempsey, who had hovered for some time unperceived around them, fell suddenly upon their rear, and, in the fury of the first assault, Robert de Quincy with a number of his knights was slain, and the standard of Leinster fell into the hands of the assailants.

However much the earl may have mourned for the loss of his son-in-law, the disgrace, for the first time, thus brought upon the English arms, and the probable effect of such an occurrence in giving encouragement to the Irish, could hardly have affected him with much less real concern. But no time was left to repair the disaster; as, shortly after, he received orders from the king, who was then in France, requiring that he should join him instantly with a re-enforcement in that country, where all the means he could muster together were now wanting to oppose the formidable league which his own sons had been the chief instruments of arraying against his power. This royal mandate the earl promptly obeyed, though risking, by his departure at so critical a moment, the safety of his yet unsettled possessions; and so satisfied was Henry with this proof of his alacrity and zeal, that he gave him, soon after his arrival, the custody of the castle of Gisors, the most important of all his frontier fortresses.

Taught thus early to see, in the misfortunes of their English rulers, some opening of hope for themselves, the Irish exulted to hear of the storm that was now gathering around the king; and, openly disavowing their late submissions, seemed to be bent on availing themselves of Strongbow's absence to break out into general revolt. A spirit of discontent, too, had arisen in the English army, which promised to be favourable to their views. Hervey of Mount-Maurice, the chief in command, had rendered himself unpopular among the soldiers; while Raymond le Gros, who acted under him, and was of a far more conciliatory and attaching nature, had won for himself the favour and affections of all. Hence a jealousy arose in the mind of the former, which disturbed and embittered the whole of their intercourse and prevented their acting together with the concert necessary to success. The serious mischief that might have resulted to the English cause, from this want of concord at head-quarters, was prevented by the return of Strongbow from France.

* By the banner and ensign of Leinster is meant the military government of it; as the constableship was the civil authority thereof."—*Notes of Harris on Ryan.*

Thinking his presence to be now more wanting in Ireland, Henry had dispensed with his farther services abroad, and sent him back with increased power, having invested him with the office of viceroy of the kingdom, and bestowed on him also the city of Waterford, together with a castle near Wicklow.*

Strongbow, on assuming his high office, found it beset with considerable difficulties. The troops had for want of pay and subsistence become mutinous, and attributing much of the hardships they suffered to his uncle, Hervey of Mount-Maurice, they at length presented themselves in a body before the earl, desiring that Raymond le Gros should be appointed to command them; and threatening, if their request should not be granted, either to return to their own country, or else join the forces of the Irish, who were now, in every part of the island, taking up arms.† However fatal to all discipline was the compliance with demands thus urged, Strongbow had now no other alternative, and their favourite officer, Raymond, was again placed at the head of the army.‡ A. D. 1173.

Knowing that plunder was their primary object, and that the wretched natives must pay the price of his popularity, Raymond led the troops directly into the heart of Ophally, and there allowed them to ravage and plunder at their pleasure. But, this indulgence having only whetted their zest for farther spoil, they made an irruption also into Munster; and taking for granted that the inhabitants Lismore were opulent, from their commerce with the neighbouring cities of Waterford and Cork, they entered and sacked that venerable town,§ and extended their pillage through the whole district belonging to it. Finding some boats just arrived from Waterford, at Lismore, they embarked on board of them the greater part of their plunder, and sent them, under the conduct of an officer named De Rutherford, to Youghal. But while waiting there for a westerly wind to convey them to Waterford, they were attacked, in the mouth of the river, by a fleet of two and thirty barks, which the citizens of Cork had sent out to intercept them. A sharp action between the two small fleets ensued, in which the Irish, we are told, made the onset with stone-slings and axes, while the weapon of the opposite party was the cross-bow, and their defence the iron corslet.‖ The result was victory on the side of the English; the commander of the squadron from Cork fell in the action, a number of his ships were taken, and Adam de Rutherford, with his booty and prizes, sailed triumphantly into Waterford.

In the mean time, Raymond, informed of the designs of the citizens of Cork, was hastening, with a select body of cavalry, to the support of his countrymen, when he found himself encountered by Mac Carthy, Prince of Desmond, who was hurrying, with equal zeal, to assist his vassals of Cork. After a short action, however, the Irish were compelled to retreat, and Raymond proceeded, without farther interruption, along the sea-coast to Waterford, leading along with him a booty of 4000 cows and sheep, taken by his troops in the territory of Lismore.¶ Inglorious and trivial as were these enterprizes, it is clear that to the license allowed to the soldiery in such expeditions Raymond chiefly owed his popularity, and the exalted station in which it had placed him. But farther views began now to open to him; and his ambition rising with his fortune, he ventured to acknowledge to Strongbow a passion which he had entertained for some time towards that nobleman's sister Basilia, and asked at once the double favour of being honoured with the hand of this lady in marriage, and of being appointed constable and standard-bearer

* Ut viri integerrimi industriam acueret, Guesfordiam ei et castellum Wickloense in perpetuum assignavit.—*Stanihurst.*

† Hibern. Expugnat. l. 2. c. 1.

‡ Ibid. l. 2. c. 2.

§ If any reliance may be placed on the accounts given by continental scholars of the famous Irish saint Cathaldus, the school, or university, for which Lismore was celebrated, might boast as early a date as the seventh century, and was at that time, according to these authorities, frequented by students from various parts of Europe, all flocking to hear the lectures of the young and holy Cathaldus. Thus, in the poetical Life of this saint by Bonaventure Mornio:—

> "Jam videas populos quos abluit advena Rhenus,
> Quosque sub occiduo collustrat cardine mundi
> Phœbus, Lesmoriam venisse; ut jura docentis
> Ediscant, titulisque sacrent melioribus arras."

Though this poem may be questioned as historical authority, and was, therefore not cited by me when treating of the early schools of Ireland, in the preceding part of this Work (see chapters 12, 13, and 14;) yet, as affording proof of the celebrity of those schools on the Continent (more especially that of Lismore,) and of the traditional fame of the scholars sent forth by them, the poem of Moroni may be regarded as strong and interesting evidence.

‖ Dum iste lapidibus et securibus acriter impetunt, illi vero tam sagittis quam laminibus ferreis, quibus abundabant, promptissime resistebant."—*Hibern. Expugnat. ut supra.*

¶ Ibid.

of Leinster.* To this suit of the aspiring soldier the earl's answer was cold and reserved, but at the same time sufficiently explicit, to show that with neither of the two requests did he mean to comply;—a repulse which so deeply offended the ambitious Raymond, that he instantly threw up his commission and retired into Wales, taking with him Meyler and others of his followers who had particularly distinguished themselves in these Irish wars.

The command of the forces was now again committed by Strongbow to his kinsman, Hervey of Mount-Maurice, who, being desirous of regaining the favour of the army, advised an attack, with a strong force, on the territories of Donald O'Brian, who had lately manifested a spirit of revolt. As if to confirm, however, Hervey's fame for ill-luck, this expedition, though commanded jointly by him and Strongbow, was unfortunate in almost all its results. A re-enforcement from the garrison of Dublin, which the earl had ordered to join him at Cashel, having rested for a night at Ossory on their march, were surprised, sleeping in their quarters, by a strong party, under Donald O'Brian, and the greater number of them put, almost unresistingly, to the sword. Finding his projects completely foiled by this disaster, Strongbow hastened to shut himself up in Waterford, while, in all parts of the country, the Irish, as if at a signal given, rose up in arms; and, even of the chieftains who had pledged their allegiance to Henry, many, following the example of the descendant of their great Brian, set up the standard of revolt.

A. D. 1174.

Among others who at this crisis cast off their fealty, is said to have been Donald Kavenagh, the son of the late king Dermot,† and hitherto faithful to the race which had patronised his ever to be remembered father. Even the monarch Roderic himself, conceiving the moment to be favourable for an effort to recover Meath, made an irruption, suddenly, with a large confederate force, into that province, from which Hugh de Lacy was then absent, and, destroying all the forts built by that lord, laid waste the whole country to the very confines of Dublin. Hugh Tirrel, who had been left to act for De Lacy, finding himself unable to defend the castle of Trim, demolished the fortifications and burned it down, as he did also the castle of Duleek, and escaped with his soldiers to Dublin.

Alarmed by the spread of this rebellious spirit among the natives, and fearing the probable revival of mutiny in his own army, Strongbow was left no other resource, however mortifying the necessity, than to ask of Raymond to return and resume his command, assuring him at the same time that the hand of Basilia should immediately be granted to him on his arrival.‡ Such a triumph, at once to love and pride, was far too tempting to admit of parley or hesitation. With a force hastily collected, consisting of about 30 knights, all of his own kindred, 100 men-at-arms, and 300 archers, Raymond, taking with him also his brave kinsman, Meyler, embarked in a fleet of fifteen transports, and arrived safe in the port of Waterford: So critically was this relief timed, that, at the very moment when the ships appeared in sight, sailing before the wind, with the ensigns of England displayed, the citizens of Waterford, provoked by the tyranny and exactions of the garrison, were about to rise and put all the English in the city to death. Landing his troops without any opposition, Raymond conducted the earl, with the whole of his force to Wexford, where, a short time after, his nuptials with the noble lady Basilia were, in the midst of pomp and rejoicings, celebrated. How imminent had been the danger from which Raymond's arrival had rescued Strongbow and his small army, was made manifest soon after their departure, when the rage of the citizens, repressed but for the moment, again violently broke forth, and a general massacre of all the English took place,—with the exception only of the garrison left in Reginald's tower, which, though few in number, succeeded ultimately in regaining possession of the town.§

Scarcely had the nuptials of Raymond and Basilia been celebrated, when, intelligence arriving of the advance of Roderic towards Dublin, the bridegroom was forced to buckle on hastily his armour, and take the field against that prince. But added to the total want, in Roderic himself, of the qualities fitted for so trying a juncture, the very nature of the force under his command completely disqualified it for regular or protracted warfare; an Irish army being, in those times, little better than a rude, tumultuous assemblage, brought

* *Lambeth MS.*—The office, it appears, could only be enjoyed by him during the minority of an infant daughter, left by De Quincy; or rather, till this daughter should be married to some one, by whom the duty of it could be performed.

† Leland, who quotes as his authority, *Annal. Ult. MS.*

‡ The substance of the letter addressed by him to Raymond on the occasion, is thus given by Giraldus:—"Inspectis literis istis nobis in manu forti subvenire non differas: et desiderum tuum in Basilia sorore mea tibi legitime copulanda, &c.

§ Hibern. Expugnat. l. 2. c. 4.

together by the impulse of passion, or the prospect of plunder, and, as soon as sated or thwarted in its immediate object, dispersing again as loosely and lawlessly as it had assembled. In this manner did the army of the monarch now retire, having overrun that whole province as far as the borders of Dublin; and there remained for Raymond, but the task of restoring the disturbed settlers to their habitations, while to Tyrrel fell the charge of repairing and rebuilding* the numerous forts which had been damaged and demolished by the Irish.

With the hand of Basilia de Clare, Raymond received from the earl, as her dowry, the lands of Idrone, Fethard, and Glascarrig, and was likewise appointed by him to the high office of constable and standard-bearer of Leinster. It is said to have been also on this occasion that he was made possessor of that great district in Kilkenny, called, after him, Grace's Country;—the Cognomen of Gros, which he transmitted to his descendants, being changed, in later times, to Gras, and at last, Grace.

Conscious that his fame and influence with the soldiery could only be maintained by ministering constantly to their rapacity, Raymond now turned his eyes to Limerick as affording temptations in the way both of rapine and revenge. The achievement of Brian, the prince of that district, the preceding year, in cutting off Strongbow's expected re-enforcement at Ossory, had marked him out as a special object of vengeance; and it was therefore resolved that his dominions should be attacked, and Limerick itself, if possible, taken by storm. This was found, however, to be no easy enterprise, as that town, being built on an island, was then encompassed round by the river Shannon. On approaching the bank, the troops hesitated, alarmed by the rapidity of the current; when Raymond's cousin, the valiant Meyler, crying out, "Onward, in the name of St. David!" spurred his horse into a part of the current that was fordable; and, followed at first by but four other knights, he succeeded in gaining the opposite bank, amidst a shower of stones and arrows from the walls, which hung over the margin of the river. Taking courage from this bold example, the remainder of the troops then forded the stream with the loss of but one knight and two horsemen of inferior rank; while the citizens, struck with alarm at such daring, deserted not only the bank, but the walls and rampart itself, and fled into the city. The usual excesses of slaughter and plunder ensued; and Raymond, leaving behind him a sufficient force to garrison the place, returned, with the remainder of his army into Leinster.

It was about this time that the Bull of Pope Adrian granting the kingdom of Ireland to Henry II., and obtained by this sovereign from the holy see as far back as the year 1151, was for the first time publicly announced to his Irish subjects.† He had, in the interval, obtained also a brief from Alexander III. confirming the grant made by the former pope, and under the same condition of the payment of the Peter-pence. His chief motive for so long delaying the promulgation of Adrian's bull is supposed to have been the fear lest certain aspersions contained in that instrument, as well on the morals as the religious doctrines of the people of Ireland, might cause irritation, among both the clergy and laity, and prevent that quiet submission to his claims which he then expected. The present rebellious temper of the Irish completely falsified this hope; and the influence of the clergy being now the only medium through which he could act on the minds and affections of the people, and endeavour to incline them to his government, the papal authority was thus late resorted to by him as a means of enlisting the great body of the clergy in his service. A. D. 1175.

The persons appointed to carry these documents to Ireland were, William Fitz-Aldelm, and Nicholas, the prior of Wallingford; and a synod of bishops being assembled, on their arrival, the papal grants were there publicly read. After performing their appointed commission, the prior and Fitz-Aldelm repaired to the king, who was then in Normandy, for the purpose of reporting to him the state of his kingdom of Ireland, and explaining the causes from whence its increased disorders had sprung. As from Hervey these royal commissioners had chiefly derived their knowledge and views of the subject, their representations would probably be tinctured with the feeling of jealousy which that officer entertained towards his popular rival. They were, however, not perhaps very remote from the truth, when they accused Raymond of having converted the English army into a mere band of freebooters, whose continued depredations had driven into revolt not only the natives themselves, but even the more friendly disposed population of the Dano-Irish

* At Castle Knock, in the neighbourhood of Dublin, there are still the remains of a castle, said to have been built by Hugh Tyrrel.

† Hibern. Expugnat. l. i. c. 6. Ware's *Annals*, ad ann. 1775. Lanigan, chap. 29. § 7.—By Leland, the promulgation of this Bull, and all the transactions connected with it, are placed without any grounds or authority that I can discover, so late as 1777.

towns. To this, on Hervey's authority, they added the serious and startling charge, that Raymond intended, with the aid of the army, to usurp the dominion of the whole island, and had even bound his soldiers to assist him by secret and treasonable oaths. Giving full credit, as it appears, to this intelligence, Henry resolved to recall so dangerous a subject; and with that view, sent over two lords of his court, in the spring of the year, to Ireland, ordering them to bring him with them into Normandy; while at the same time two other noblemen, who accompanied them, were charged to remain with the earl, and assist him with their counsels.

On receiving the orders of his sovereign, Raymond lost not a moment in preparing to obey them; and there was now wanting only a fair wind for his departure, when intelligence arrived that O'Brian of Thomond, the ever active enemy of the English power, had surrounded Limerick with a large force, and that, all the provisions laid in for the garrison having been exhausted, they were reduced to the last extremity. Strongbow, conscious of the critical position in which this event placed him, ordered his forces to be immediately mustered, and prepared to march, at their head, for the succour of the town. But a new triumph awaited the popular general. The troops refused to march under any other leader; and the earl, after consulting with the king's commissioners and receiving their sanction, in consideration of the emergency of the occasion, requested of Raymond to take the command of the expedition. To this the general, with well-feigned reluctance, consented; the troops saw in his power the triumph of their own; and he was now again at the head of an army in whose minds good fortune was identified with his name. The force he at present had under his command consisted of four-score heavy armed cavalry, 200 horse, and 300 archers; and the already too common spectacle of Irishmen fighting in the ranks of foreigners against their own countrymen was exhibited on this occasion;—the detachment being joined, on its march, by some bands of Irish infantry, under the chiefs of Ossory and Kinsale, whom family feuds had rendered inveterate against O'Brian.

Before the arrival of this force at Cashel, they learned that the Irish, on hearing of their approach, had raised the siege of Limerick, and, taking up their position in a defile, near Cashel, through which the English army must pass, had there strongly entrenched themselves. Raymond, on learning this intelligence, pushed forward; and when, upon arriving in sight of the enemy's position, he proceeded coolly and deliberately to prepare for the attack, the prince of Ossory, who, having been accustomed to the impetuous onsets of his own countrymen, mistook this quiet for irresolution or fear, addressed an encouraging speech to the English troops, exhorting them to behave, on that day, in a manner worthy of their former exploits, and adding this extraordinary menace—"If you conquer, our axes shall co-operate with your swords, in sharply pursuing and slaying the fugitive enemy. But should you be vanquished, then shall these same weapons of ours, which never strike but on the conquering side, be as certainly, turned against you." The assault, however, proved as successful as the preparation for it had been cool and determined;* Meyler Fitz-Henry, who led the vanguard into the pass, having broken, at a single charge, through all the defences opposed to him.

The results of this victory, which was attended with great slaughter of the Irish, proved also in other respects important; as not only had Limerick been relieved by it, but the brave O'Brian, at length exhausted by his long and fruitless struggle, was now induced to ask for peace; and, with that view, proposed a conference with the English general. At the same time, Roderic also, repentant, as it would seem, of his late inroads into Meath, solicited an interview, with the like object; and the precautions used in arranging the parley, showed how little the parties engaged in it were disposed to place confidence in each other;—the monarch, Roderic, who had come for the purpose with an escort of boats down the Shannon, having taken up his station on the western shore of Lough Dearg, while the prince of Thomond and his train fixed themselves in a wood on the opposite side of the lake; and the place chosen by the English general was near Killaloe, at an equal distance from both. The result of the parley, so cautiously conducted, was, that the two princes renewed their fealty to Henry, and gave hostages for a more faithful observance of their respective engagements in future.

Scarcely had Raymond thus signalized his military administration, by receiving on one day the submission of the king of Connaught and the prince of Thomond, when he found himself called upon to assist M'Arthur, prince of Desmond, whose son had rebelled against him, and nearly succeeded in effecting his expulsion from his dominions.

* "I presume," says Lord Lyttelton, "That in this and other assaults of entrenchments, or any fortified places, the English horsemen dismounted, and fought on foot, sword in hand; cavalry not being proper for such operations."

This request being accompanied by offers, as tempting to the general himself as to his followers, of rich gifts, abundant plunder, and liberal pay, the required aid was promptly given, and the prince of Desmond, released from the prison into which his own son had cast him, took ample revenge, by depriving the son of his head. In return for the important service thus conferred upon him, M'Arthy bestowed upon his gallant deliverer a large territorial possession in that part of Desmond called Kerry.* After so full a flow of success, no farther thoughts were, of course, entertained of removing Raymond from the country, or depriving him of a post which there appeared no other so eminently qualified to fill.

An important event occurred at this period, the conclusion of a treaty between Henry and the Irish monarch, which owes its importance, however, far less to any practical consequences that have ever resulted from it, than to its bearing on the question once so warmly and uselessly agitated, as to the nature and extent of the right of dominion which the King of England at that time acquired over Ireland. Even had Roderic been a prince capable of grappling with adverse fortune, the nature of the armies he had to depend upon, and the constant defection of his subordinate princes, must have left him hopeless of ultimate success in a prolonged struggle against the English, however a desperate spirit of patriotism might have urged him still to persevere. But the Irish monarch was of no such heroic mould. To preserve his province from farther ravage, and secure, by timely submission, favourable terms from the English king, were now the great and sole objects of his policy. Accordingly, in the course of this year, he sent over to England an embassy, empowered to negotiate, in his name, with Henry, consisting of Catholicus, archbishop of Tuam, Concors, abbot of St. Brendan's and "Master" Laurence (as the excellent archbishop is styled,) chancellor of the Irish king. These plenipotentiaries having, about Michaelmas, waited on Henry at Windsor, a grand council was there held by extraordinary summons, and a solemn convention ratified, of which the terms were as follows:—† A. D. 1175.

Henry granted to his liegeman, Roderic, that, as long as he continued faithfully to serve him, he should be a king under him, ready to do him service, as his vassal, and that he should hold his hereditary territories as firmly and peaceably as he had held them before the coming of Henry into Ireland. He was likewise to have under his dominion and jurisdiction all the rest of the island, and the inhabitants thereof, kings and princes included, and was bound to oblige them to pay tribute, through his hands, to the king of England, preserving to that monarch his other rights. These kings, princes, &c., were likewise to hold peaceable possession of their principalities‡ as long as they remained faithful to the king of England, and paid him their tribute, and all other rights, through the king of Connaught's hands,—saving in all things the honour and prerogative of both these kings. And, in case that any of them should rebel against the king of England, or against Roderic, and refuse to pay their tribute or other duties, in the manner before prescribed, or should depart from their fealty to the king of England, the king of Connaught was then authorized to judge them, and, if requisite, remove them from their governments or possessions; and, should his own power not be sufficient for that purpose, he was to be assisted by the English king's constable and his household.§ The annual tribute demanded of Roderic, and the Irish at large, was a merchantable hide for every tenth head of cattle killed in Ireland.

It will be seen by these articles, that the amount of power and jurisdiction still left in the hands of Roderic was considerable; but with respect to the territories within which he could exercise these powers, strict limits were laid down; nor in any of those districts immediately under the dominion of the King of England and his barons, was Roderic allowed to interfere, or to claim any authority whatsoever. In this exempted territory, which formed what was afterwards called the Pale, were comprised Dublin and all its appurtenances, the whole of Meath and Leinster, besides Waterford, and the country from thence to Dungarvon included.

And if any of the Irish (continued the treaty,) who had fled from the territories of the

* This property Raymond settled upon his younger son Maurice, who became in right of it, Lord of Lixnaw; and was the ancestor and founder of the Fitz Maurice family, of which the marquis of Lansdowne, as earl of Kerry, is now the representative.

† The exceptions will be found specified afterwards.

‡ At the time of the invasion of Ireland by the English, that country was subdivided into several independent provinces, of which the following seven were the principal:—Desmond, under the Mac Carthys; Thomond, subject to the O'Brians; Hy-Kinselagh, or Leinster, under the Hy-Kinselagh line of Mahons; the south Hy-Niall, or Meath, under the Clan Colmans, otherwise the O'Malachlins; the north Hy-Niall, under the O'Neills and O'Donalls; and Hy-Brune, together with Hy-Fiacra, otherwise Connaught, under the O'Connors."—*Dissertat.*, Sect. 13.

§ Both Leland and Lyttleton mention "soldiers" here; but without any authority from the original.

king's barons should desire to return thither, they might do so in peace, paying the tribute above mentioned, as others did, or performing the services they were anciently accustomed to perform for their lands, according as their lords should think best; and if any of the Irish who were subjects of the king of Connaught should refuse to return to him, he might compel them to do so, in order that they might quietly remain in his land.* The said king of Connaught was, moreover, empowered to take hostages from all those whom the king of England had committed to him, at his own and the king of England's choice, and was to give the said hostages to the king of England, or others, at the king's choice; and all those from whom these securities were demanded were to perform certain annual services to the king of England, by presents of Irish dogs and hawks,† and were not to detain any person whatsoever, belonging to any land or territory of that prince, against his will and commandment.

Such were the articles of this singular treaty, agreed upon and ratified in a council of prelates and barons, the names of eight of whom are affixed to the document: and among these subscribing witnesses is found the pious and patriotic Laurence O'Toole, then archbishop of Dublin; By this compact, it was solemnly determined that the kings of England should, in all future time, be lords paramount of Ireland; that the fee of the soil should be in them, and that all future monarchs of Ireland should hold their dominion but as tenants *in capite*, or vassals of the English crown.

CHAPTER XXX.

False notions respecting the conquest of Ireland—First appointment of an Irish bishop, by Henry.—Death of Strongbow.—Raymond summoned to Dublin.—Entrusts the custody of Limerick to O'Brian.—Dishonourable act of O'Brian.—Fitz-Aldelm appointed chief governor.—Jealously entertained of the Geraldines.—Death of Maurice Fitz-Gerald.—Illiberal conduct of Fitz-Aldelm towards his sons.—Success of the Irish in Meath.—Character of Fitz-Aldelm's administration.—Expedition of De Courcy into Ulster.—Council convoked by the Pope's legate.—Dissensions in the family of Roderic.—Unsuccessful expedition of the English into Connaught.—Henry constitutes his son John, Lord of Ireland.—Grants of land to Fitz-Stephen and others.—Fitz-Aldelm recalled from the government.—Cogan succeeded by Hugh de Lacy.

The reciprocal relations of chief and vassal, which arose naturally out of military service, and furnished one of the two great principles on which the feudal system was founded, had already, with its exactions of homage and fealty, formed a part, as we have seen, of the polity of the Irish. Familiarized, therefore, as had been their princes and chieftains to the custom of holding their territories from superior lords, on conditions of allegiance and homage, there was to them nothing novel or startling in the mere forms, as they deemed them, of submission by which Roderic now laid the lordship of Ireland at the feet of an English prince. But though thus acquainted (as were, indeed, most of what are called the barbarous nations‡) with that part of the policy of the feudal system

* "Et si Hyberniens qui anfugerunt redire voluerint ad terram Baronum Regis Angliæ, rejeant in pace reddendo tributum prædictum sicut alii readunt, vel faciendo antiqua servitia quæ facre solobant pro terris suis: et hoc sit in arbitrio et voluntate dominorum suorum. Et si aliqui redire noluerint ad dominum eorum regem Conactæ, sipse cogat eos redire ad terram suam, ut ibi maneant et pacem habeant."—*Benedict. Abbas.* Thus translated by Leland, who has entirely, it will be perceived, mistaken the meaning of the whole passage:—"The Irish who had fled from hence (the English districts) were to return, and either to pay their tribute, or to perform the services required by their tenures, at the option of their immediate lords; and if refractory, Roderic, at the requisition of their lords was to compel them to return."

† The Irish wolf-dogs were at a very early period famous; there being little doubt that the *Scotici canes* mentioned by Symmachus, as having been exhibited at the Circensian games, were of that peculiar species of wolf-dog for which Ireland was once celebrated, but which, after the extinction of wolves in that country, come to be neglected, and of course degenerated. (See *Harris* on Ware, chap. 22.) The dogs mentioned, however, among the annual services required of Roderic, were evidently of the greyhound kind; and how great was the value set upon Irish greyhounds and hawks in the time of Henry VIII. may be judged from a grant made by that king to a foreign nobleman, at "the instant suit," as it is said of the duke of Albuquerque, of "two goshawkes and four greyhounds, out of Ireland, yearly."

To Robert Barry is attributed by Carve (*Lyra sive Anacephal.*,) the credit of having first introduced the diversion of hawking into Ireland.—"Fuit hic primus qui accipitres cicuravit atque venandi seu accipitrani usui assuefecit."

‡ Meaning, in general, all such as were beyond the bounds of the Roman empire.

which regulated the military relations between chief and vassal, they were wholly ignorant of its other more important principle, which made property the foundation of this mutual tie, and bound together lord and tenant by reciprocal obligations of protection and service. It is not improbable, therefore, that the general readiness of the Irish princes to tender their allegiance to Henry* arose from their habit of viewing this ceremony but as a pledge of military service, and their entire ignorance of the important and permanent change which, in the eyes of Henry's lawyers, would be effected in their right and title to their respective territories by that ceremony.

But though, by the treaty between the two kings acknowledging Henry to be lord paramount of Ireland, the sovereignty over that island was transferred to the English crown, yet, in point of real power, the king of England was no farther advanced by it than when, a few years before, he had set sail from the Irish shore; and, at that period, as a great law authority, Sir J. Davies, has declared, he left behind him not one more true subject than he had found on his arrival. Within the same limited sphere of dominion, extending to not more than one third of the kingdom, did the power and jurisdiction of the English crown continue to be circumscribed for many centuries after, making no impression whatever on the laws, language, or customs of the great mass of the natives, but remaining an isolated colony, in the midst of a hostile and ever resisting people. And yet to a footing on the soil thus limited and precarious, the first advances of which were, indeed, amicably yielded to, but its every farther inroad contested at every step, almost all of the historians of these islands, from, Giraldus† down to Hume, have strangely assigned the name and attributes of a regular "conquest." How much, in the reign of James I., this crude and short sighted notion stood in the way of the sounder views then beginning to gain ground with respect to the relations between the two countries, appears from the arguments employed by the king's attorney-general, at that period, to disabuse the public mind of so vain and misleading a notion.

Had Ireland resisted, from the first, her invaders with a spirit worthy of her ancient name, and had she, yielding only to superior force, been at last effectually brought under, then, indeed, might the history of the two countries have had to record a conquest honourable to both; while both alike would have been spared that long train of demoralizing consequences which arose out of the means, as rash and violent as they were inefficient, employed to bring Ireland under subjection. Hence, the confused and discordant relations in which the two races inhabiting her shores necessarily stood towards each other,—the one assuming the rights of conquest, without any power to enforce them; the other pretending to independence, with a foreign intruder in the very heart of the land; while, to add to all this confusion, there prevailed in the country two different codes of laws, between whose constantly conflicting ordinances the wretched people were kept distracted, while their unprincipled rulers had recourse indifferently to one or the other, according as it suited the temporary purposes of spoliation or revenge.

It is said of the Norman followers of William the Conqueror, that they despised the English for submitting to them so easily; and such was evidently the feeling awakened in their Anglo-Norman descendants by the facility with which the Irish gave way to their first encroachments. But as soon as these intruders began to discover that, however feebly opposed in their acquisition of the spoil, they were left not a moment of peace or security for the enjoyment of it; when they found that the Irish "enemy," as if to atone for the weak submission of their forefathers, never once slumbered in the task of harassing the despoiler, and rendering the throne of their ruler a seat of thorns; then was there added to the haughty contempt they had before felt for the natives a deep and inveterate hatred; and how far both these feelings were allowed to operate, will be seen in the History of the Parliament of the English Pale, whose successive enactments against the "mere Irish," exhibit almost every form of insult and injury that the combined bitterness of hatred and contempt could, in their most venomous conjunction, be expected to engender.

With respect to Henry's alleged "conquest" of this country, how far that able monarch himself was from laying any claim to the rights of a conqueror, appears from the spirit and terms of his treaty with Roderic; according to which but two of the five kingdoms of which Ireland consisted, and three principal cities, were exempted from the jurisdiction of the native monarch, while in all the other parts of the country, the ancient authorities

* The English chronicler, William of Neubridge, attributes, naturally enough, the readiness of their submission to fear:—"Adventu ejus pavefactos, sine sanguine subjugavit."—L. 2. c. 26.

† Giraldus himself, however, though styling his history of these wars "The Conquest of Ireland," is forced to admit, on considering the result of the struggle commemorated by him, that it was a drawn battle between the two nations:—"Ut nec ille ad plenum victor in Palladis hactenus arcem victoriosus ascenderit, nec iste victus omnino plene servitutis jugo colla submiserit."—*Hibern. Expugnat.* l. 2. c. 33.

and laws remained in full force: the princes appointed their own magistrates and officers, retained the power of pardoning and punishing malefactors, and made war or peace with each other, according to their pleasure.

In the same council which ratified this singular treaty, Henry exercised his first act of authority over the Irish Church. As, in the subjection of England to the Normans, the native clergy were found to be useful instruments, so in those parts of Ireland, beyond the English boundary, the influence of the clergy was Henry's chief support. Desirous of strengthening this interest, he now appointed a native of Ireland, named Augustin, to the bishopric of Waterford, and, recognising the primatial rights of Cashel, sent him to be consecrated by the archbishop of that see.

A. D. 1175. About this time, the venerable St. Laurence, being at Canterbury, in attendance on the king, escaped narrowly a frantic attempt upon his life. Having been requested by the monks to celebrate mass, he was proceeding to the altar, dressed in his pontificals, when a man of deranged mind, who had heard of his fame for holiness, and thought it would be a meritorious act to confer on him the crown of martyrdom, rushed forth upon him from the crowd with a large club, and laid him prostrate before the altar. On recovering from the effects of the outrage, the good archbishop, finding that the king had condemned his assailant to death, begged earnestly for his pardon, and with some difficulty obtained it.

A. D. 1176. In the year 1176, the English colony was deprived, by death, of one of its most distinguished and successful founders, Richard de Clare, earl of Pembroke, who died in Dublin about the end of May, of a cancerous sore in his leg. His sister Basilia, who was with him in his last moments, despatched secretly a messenger to Raymond, who was then in Desmond with a letter enigmatically conveying intelligence of the event. Her great tooth, she told him, which had ached so long, was now at last fallen out, and she therefore earnestly besought of him to return to Dublin with all possible speed. Feeling how necessary, at such a juncture, was the immediate departure of himself and his army for Leinster, yet unwilling to abandon Limerick, a conquest redounding so much to his interest and fame, Raymond saw, at length, that he had no other alternative than to deliver up that city to Donald O'Brian, to affect reliance on his faith as one of the barons of the king, and to exact from him a new oath of fealty, taking his chance for the lord of Thomond's observance of it.

The result was precisely such as, without any great stretch of foresight, might have been anticipated. Force alone having procured the submission of O'Brian, no sooner had the English troops passed over one end of the bridge than they saw the other broken down by the Irish, and, at the same time, the city, in all its four quarters, was in flames,—having been set fire to by command of O'Brian, in order that Limerick, as he remarked, might never again be made a nest of foreigners.* It is said, that when Henry was told of Raymond's conduct respecting Limerick, he pronounced the following generous and soldierly judgment upon it:—"Great courage was shown in the taking of the town; greater in the recovery of it; but wisdom only in the abandonment of it."†

On the arrival of Raymond in Dublin, the earl's remains were interred with the pomp becoming his station, in the Cathedral Church, of the Holy Trinity, now Christ Church, in that city;—the archbishop Laurence presiding over the ceremony.

The political position occupied by Strongbow, in relation to Ireland, renders it difficult to sum up, impartially, any general estimate of his character; the very same qualities and achievements which won for him the eulogies of one party, having drawn down on his memory, from the other, the most bitter censure and hate. What his own countrymen have lauded as vigour and public spirit, those who were the victims of his stern policy have pronounced to be the grossest exaction and tyranny. Full allowance, of course, is to be made for the difficulties and odium of such a position; and where there are great or shining qualities to divert censure from the almost unavoidable wrongs which a military adventurer in a foreign land is, by the very nature of the mission, led to inflict, the historian, in such cases, may fairly suffer his judgment to relax into some degree of leniency in its verdict.

The splendid results, as far as regarded his own personal power and enrichment,

* The Abbé O'Geoghegan, in the fullness of his Irish zeal, thus endeavours to defend this unchivalrous act of O'Brian:—"Cette action d'O'Brien, que les Anglois ont traitée de perfidie insigne, n'est pas aussi noire qu'elle le paroit d'abord. Il faut observer que c'étoit le défaut de tout autre défenseur qui avoit engagé les Anglois à confier cett place à O'Brien. Celui-ci ne sembloit-il pas dispensé de reconnoissance pour une confiance à laquelle forçoit la nécessité? D'ailleurs O'Brien étoit naturellement le maître de cette contrée; ne semble-t il pas juste qu'il usât de l'unique moyen qu'il avoit pour l'arracher à d'injustes usurpateurs, et qui étoit de détruire leurs places?"

† "Magnus fuit ausus in aggrediendo; major in subveniendo; sed sapientia solum in decernendo." *Hibern. Expugnat.* l. 2. c. 15.

which arose out of Strongbow's Irish expedition, threw round his career that sort of spurious lustre, which great success, however attained, is almost always sure to impart; and that this success, as well as the courage by which it was achieved, recommended him to Henry's favour, appears from that prince having called in his aid when pressed by the dangers he was exposed to by the rebellion of his two sons. But here all the grounds on which we can rest any favourable opinion of Strongbow's character are exhausted; nor does he appear to have possessed any one great or elevating quality, by which the views that first prompted his enterprize could be ennobled, or the means which he adopted for their accomplishment can be palliated. Even in warfare—the walk where his talents most shone—it is evident that he was wanting in one of the chief requisites of a general, the power of originating plans of military operations; as we learn, from a most flattering painter of his character, Gerald of Cambria, that all his enterprizes were advised and planned for him by others, and that he never of himself ventured upon any movement in the field.

How strong was the traditional impression of the cruelty of his character, appears from the tale told—whether truly or not appears more than doubtful—of his inhuman conduct towards his son. This youth, as already has been stated, having been alarmed by the war-cry of the Irish,* at the battle of the Pass, in Idrone, fled in a panic to Dublin, and there announced that Strongbow and his army had all been destroyed. When assured however of his mistake, he hastened to join the earl in his camp, and was cheerfully congratulating him on his victory,‖ when the inhuman father drew his sword, and, as the tradition runs, cut the ill-fated youth in two.†

The taste for founding and endowing religious establishments, which prevailed at this time among the chiefs of both nations, presented a painful contrast to the scenes of blood and havoc in which they were almost daily engaged; more especially as the wealth employed for such pious uses was, in general, the unholy produce of spoliation and wrong. We have already seen that the traitor, Dermot, was most liberal in his endowment of religious houses; and his son-in-law, Strongbow, following in his footsteps, founded at Kilmainham, near Dublin, a priory for knights of the order of St. John of Jerusalem.‡ But how little even this lord's munificence to the church could conciliate respect for his memory, appears from the terms in which an English chronicler, of his own times, speaks of his death: "He carried to the grave with him," says William of Neubridge, "no part of those Irish spoils he had coveted so eagerly after in life, putting to risk even his eternal salvation to amass them; but at last, leaving to unthankful heirs all he had acquired through so much toil and danger, he afforded by his fate a salutary lesson to mankind."§ Strongbow left by his wife Eva, the daughter of Dermot, king of Leinster, an only child‖ named Isabel, heiress of all his vast possessions, and afterwards married to William Mareschall, earl of Pembroke.

* See Harris on Ware, *Antiq.* chap. 21. sect. 3. Harris, by the way, has done injustice here to Stanihurst, in numbering him among those who subscribed to the Gadelian, or Milesian legend; that writer's views on the subject being, as the following passage will show, such as most men of any sense, if they give but fair play to their understanding, must take:—"Habuerint Scoti, sicut et plurimæ quondam nationes, quæ jam nunc celebritate famæ in magno nomine sunt, sua quasi cunabula, aliqua barbarie infuscata. Et hoc prudentius esset confiteri, quàm commentitia hac rerum gestarum gloria, seipsos apud imperitos venditare."—*De Reb. Hibern.* l. 1.

The misrepresentation which Harris has given of Stanihurst's opinions he took upon trust from Spenser (*View of the State of Ireland,*) who has himself hazarded an explanation of the cry "Farrah," which is hardly less absurd than the other. "Here also," he says, "lyeth open another manifest proofe that the Irish bee Scythes, or Scots, for in all their encounters they use one very common word, crying Ferragh, Ferragh, which is a Scottish word, to wit, the name of one of the first kings of Scotland called Feragus, or Fergus."

† "This tradition," says Leland, "receives some countenance from the ancient monument in the cathedral of Dublin, in which the statue of the son of Strongbow is continued only to the middle, with the bowels open and supported by the hands. But as this monument was erected some centuries after the death of Strongbow, it is of the less authority. The Irish annals," he adds, "repeatedly mention the earl's son as engaged in several actions posterior to this period."

Stanihurst mentions that, by the falling in of a part of the cathedral in the year 1568, this monument was very much injured, but through the care of Sir Henry Sidney was afterwards repaired and restored.—"Coactis fabris marmoreum parentis et nati tymbon singulari opre artificioque interpolandum curavit."

‡ "The noble founder," says Archdall, "had enfeoffed the prior in the whole lands of Kilmainham." *Monast. Hibern.* He adds that "king Henry II. having enfeoffed Hugh Tirrell the elder in the lands of Kilmahalloch, with the appurtenances, together with the moiety of the river Liffey as far as the water-course near the gallows, Hugh bestowed the said lands on the prior of this hospital.

§ Ex Hibernicis manubiis quibus multum inhiaverat et pro quibus tam multum cum periculo sudaverat salutis, nihil secum hinc abiens homo ille portavit; sed laborioseque periculoseque quæsita ingratis relinquens heredibus; salubrem quoque multis ex suo occasu doctrinam reliquit.—*Rer. Angl.* l. 2. c. 20.

‖ There is some confusion in the accounts given by different historians of the number and sex of the children Strongbow left behind him. The chronicler Diceto states, in opposition to all the known facts that a boy, by the princess Eva, scarce three years old, was his heir:—"Filium vix plene triennem, ex filia memorati regis sullatum relinquens heredem." According to Lord Lyttelton, he left a son and a daughter, both infants. But a male child by Eva would have inherited, of course, the Irish possessions; and any sons the earl might have had by a former wife were no longer infants.

On Strongbow's death, the two English noblemen who had been sent by Henry to assist him in his government returned to that prince, leaving in Raymond's hands all the authority of the state till the will of the sovereign should be known. As no opportunity, however, had yet been afforded for a refutation of the charges advanced against Raymond, the king's jealousy of the influence of that officer still remained unabated. Accordingly, he sent into Ireland, as his justiciary, or viceroy, William Fitz-Aldelm, attended by a guard of ten knights of his own household, and having under his order, with each a similar train, John de Courcy, Robert Fitz-Stephen, and Milo de Cogan; all of whom had served the king gallantly, both in England and France. On being apprised of their arrival, Raymond hastened to meet them, on the borders of Wexford, with a chosen body of cavalry; and having received them with all due marks of respect, went through the ceremony of delivering up to the deputy all the cities and castles held by the English, as well as the hostages of the princes or chieftains of Ireland committed to his keeping.

A proof of the jealousy already entertained of the Geraldine family, of which Raymond was one of the earliest and noblest ornaments, is mentioned by the chronicler as having occurred during this ceremonial. On seeing him approach at the head of so fine a troop of young men, all of their leader's own kindred, bearing the same coat of arms emblazoned on their shields, and all mounted on beautiful horses, which they coursed playfully over the field, Fitz-Aldelm said, in a low voice, to some of his attendants, "I will shortly check this pride, and disperse these shields;"* and from that hour, adds the chronicler, such was the policy pursued, not only by Fitz-Aldelm himself but by every deputy who succeeded him. Nor was it long before an opportunity for the display of this feeling was furnished by the death of Maurice Fitz-Gerald, the original stock from whence, by the three sons he left behind, have descended all the noble and illustrious families of this name in Ireland. Scarcely had the breath left his frame, when Fitz-Aldelm seized on the castle of Wicklow, which strongbow had granted to Maurice Fitz-Gerald for his services; and, by way of atonement for this injustice, gave to the three sons the small city of Ferns; where, however, from the want of strongholds, they were much exposed to the incursions of the neighbouring inhabitants. They had built, for the security of their territory, a rude fortress; but this, by order of Walter Aleman, Fitz-Aldelm's nephew, in consequence, it is said, of bribes received from the natives, was maliciously razed to the ground.

How unavailing, sometimes, were even such defences against sudden attacks, had been seen on a late occasion, when the castle of Slane, in Meath, which had been granted by De Lacy to Richard le Fleming, having been surprised by the Irish chief to whom that principality legitimately belonged, the whole garrison and inmates of the castle were put to the sword, and Le Fleming himself slain. Such alarm did this event spread throughout Meath, that the garrisons of three other castles, built by the same lord, all quitted them the following day.*

The unpopularity which attended Fitz-Aldelm's administration may be sufficiently accounted for from its general character, without laying much stress on the particular charges which have been brought against it by the chroniclers; and the simple fact, that he was actuated in his government more by political than by military considerations, abundantly explains the contemptuous impatience with which he was submitted to by the colonists, who, being for the most part armed and rapacious adventurers, had hitherto prospered, and expected still farther to prosper, by the trenchant policy of the sword. Among those most impatient of such inaction was John de Courcy, a baron second in command to Fitz-Aldelm, and gifted with extraordinary prowess and daring. Having looked to Ireland as a field of spoil and adventure, De Courcy was determined not to be baulked in his anticipations: so, choosing out of the troops under his command a body of two-and-twenty knights, and about three hundred other soldiers, he proposed to lead them into the heart of Ulster,—a region unvisited yet by the English arms, and therefore opening to his fierce ambition a fresh source of aggrandizement and military fame.

At the beginning of the year 1177, in defiance of a peremptory order from the deputy, De Courcy set out from Dublin with this small force, and arrived in four days, by a rapid march at Downpatrick, the metropolis of Ulidia,† or Down, and the residence of the king of that territory, Roderic Mac Dunlevy. The alarm caused by this inroad of foreigners into a country where they had hitherto been known but by rumour, and where, trusting to their distance from the seat of conflict, the inhabitants were unprepared with the means of defence, was at first so general and overwhelming, that scarce any resistance was

* "Ad suos se vertens, demissa voce, superbiam hanc, inquit, in brevi comprimam et clypeos istos dispergam."—*Hibern. Expugnat.* l. 3. c. 15.

† Ulidia or Ullah, comprised at the most the now county of Down, and some parts of Antrim.

made; and the people of the town, unapprised of the approach of an enemy till they heard, at day break, the clangour of the English bugles sounding* in their streets, became helpless victims of the rage and rapacity of the soldiery. It happened that the pope's legate, cardinal Vivian, was then at Downpatrick, having arrived there a short time before from Scotland;† and, struck with horror at this unprovoked aggression, he endeavoured to mediate terms of peace between the two parties; proposing that De Courcy should withdraw his army from Ulidia, on condition of the prince of that country paying tribute to Henry.

This offer De Courcy sternly refused; and Vivian, provoked by such gross injustice, now strenuously advised the Ulidian Prince, and even besought him, as he valued his blessing, to stand up manfully in defence of his violated territories.‡ The panic into which the natives had at first been thrown having by this time subsided, a large tumultuary force was collected, consisting of no less, it is said than ten thousand men; at the head of which the king marched to drive the enemy from his capital. De Courcy, however, advanced from the town to meet them, and a hard-fought battle ensued, in which this lord himself and some of his knights performed prodigies of valour, and which ended in the total defeat and rout of the Irish.§ In the course of the action, Malachy, the bishop of Down, was taken prisoner; but, through the intercession of the cardinal was again set at liberty, and restored to his see.

With the superstition common to most of the heroes of that period, De Courcy persuaded himself that he had, by this expedition fulfilled a prophecy of Mirlin, which had declared, that a white knight, sitting on a white horse, and bearing birds on his shield, would be the first that with force of arms would enter and invade Ulster. The important battle, also, which he had now gained, was the same predicted, as he fancied, in one of St. Columba's prophecies; where it was foretold, that so great would be the carnage of the Irish, that the enemy would wade up to the knees in their blood. So strongly had the predictions of this saint affected De Courcy's imagination‖, that he always carried about with him a book,¶ in the Irish language, wherein they were written, and slept with it under his pillow; regarding these prophecies as a sort of "mirror" of the wondrous achievements he was himself destined to perform. In the month of June following, De Courcy again defeated an army of the Ultonians; and among the English wounded in this second conflict, was Armoric of St. Laurence, ancestor of the barons of Howth.

While John de Courcy was thus overrunning Ulster, where his small force had extended their incursions into Dalriada and Tyrone, the legate, whose mission, notwithstanding his generous effort in favour of the Ultonians, had for its object to forward Henry's designs upon Ireland, proceeded to Dublin, and there convoked a general council of bishops and abbots; in which setting forth the right of dominion over that country conferred by the pope upon Henry, he impressed on them the necessity of paying obedience to such high authority under pain of excommunication. He also, among other regulations, promulgated at this council, gave leave to the English soldiers to provide themselves with victuals for their expeditions out of the churches, into which, as inviolable sanctuaries, they used to be removed by the natives;—merely ordering, that, for the provisions thus taken, a reasonable price should be paid to the rectors of the churches.

Soon after the dissolution of this council, we find another expedition undertaken by the English, and under circumstances peculiarly disgraceful to most of the parties concerned in it. Some bitter quarrel having for a long time existed between Roderic O'Connor and

* "Adeo inexpectatus penetravit, ut cives, metu vacui, Britannicas copias in Ultoniam influere minimè somniarint, usque eò dum, in variis partibus urbis disturbatis, buccinarum clangor prima luce intonuit." *Stanihurst*, l. 4.

† Hibern. Expugnat. l. 2. c. 16. Gulielm. Neubrig. l. 3., c. 9. Leland mistakenly represents Vivian as having come to Ireland in the train of Fitz-Aldelm, the new justiciary.

‡ "Qui pugnandum pro patria esse dixit, et pugnaturis cum obsecrationibus benedixit." *Gulielm. Neubrig. ut suprd.*

§ Adopting the improbable statement of Giraldus respecting this battle that the number of Irish engaged in it was ten thousand, while their victors, the English, were not quite four hundred, Stanihurst yet falls into the gross absurdity of praising the military valour on both sides as equal. Thus, for the mere pleasure, as it would seem, of turning a turgid sentence, he says, "Nulli parti militaris virtus deest sed victoriæ elargitor, Deus," &c. &c. Again, "Ultonienses, ut est hominum genus naturâ et usu valde bellicosum, nam conducti in armis ævum agunt, visis Britannis, non timide ac diffidenter, sed ordinate et audacter processum efficiunt."

‖ According to Stanihurst, John de Courcy, in his anxiety to adapt these prophecies to himself, took the not unskilful mode of adapting himself to the prophecies; and, with that view, provided for his own equipment, in proceeding to Ulster, a white horse, a shield with bees on it, and all the other foretold appendages of the destined conqueror of Ulidia; so that, as Stanihurst expresses it, "he sallied forth like an actor, dressed to perform a part:"—ut in Ultoniam, tanquam personatus comœdus, advolarit."

¶ "Ipse vero Joannes librum nunc propheticum Hibernice scriptum tanquam operum suorum speculum pro manibus dicitur habuisse."—*Girald.* "Ad dormiendum proficiscens, eundem sub cubicularis lecti pulvino collocaret."—*Stanihurst.*

his eldest son Murtagh, the young prince had in consequence of these differences fled to Dublin, and invited Fitz-Aldelm to make war upon his father, offering himself to conduct into Connaught the army destined to this service. It does not appear that there had been on the part of Roderic any violation of the treaty entered into with Henry, or that, by any offensive step whatsoever, he had given provocation to the English government. The hope of being able, however, to profit by this family feud, to render it the means of dividing and distracting the strength of Connaught, and thereby facilitate the acquisition of that province for Henry, was far too tempting to be easily resisted. Accordingly Fitz-Aldelm, though drained already of a part of his army by the detachment led into Ulster by De Courcy, was yet able to send, under Milo de Cogan, in aid of the unnatural son's treason, a force of horsemen and archers, amounting to more than 500 men.

Crossing the Shannon, these troops advanced as far as Tuam, unresisted, finding neither people nor provisions throughout the whole of the way. The inhabitants had retired, with their families and cattle, to the fastnesses of the hills, or into inaccessible woods, first destroying all such stores of provisions as were not concealed in subterranean granaries; and, when they had not time to remove them from the houses and churches, setting fire to the towns themselves in which these structures stood, and thus consuming all together. So completely did this mode of proceeding distress and baffle their invaders, that at the end of eight days they were compelled to return, and without having gained a single advantage. On approaching the Shannon, they were suddenly attacked by Roderic O'Connor, who had waited their coming, with a large force, in a wood not far from that river; and, after suffering considerable loss, they at length forced their way, and succeeded in reaching Dublin. Roderic's son, the traitor Murtagh, was taken prisoner in this action; and the men of Connaught,—not one of whom, it appears, had followed his example in joining the foreigners,—delivered him up into the hands of his father, who punished his treason, according to the barbarous fashion of those times, by depriving him of his eyes.

To a mind acute as was that of Henry, it must have become, at this time, sufficiently manifest, that out of such crude and discordant elements as were now conflicting in Ireland, neither peace nor order were likely soon to rise; and that the grasp of one strong and steady hand, acting with immediate, not deputed, power, and coercing all parties alike into obedience and observance of justice, presented the sole means or hope that human policy could suggest for the reduction of so crude and complicated a chaos into order. Fated as Ireland was by her position, and even still more by the feuds prevailing among her own people, to become subject to foreign dominion, the presence, for a few years, of a ruler like Henry in the land, with an army large enough to render resistance hopeless, would, by lending to the new institutions introduced by him at once enforcement and superintendence, have secured both their reception by the country, and their adaptation to its peculiar habits and wants; and in this manner, perhaps, the euthanasia of Ireland's independence might, with advantage and honour to both countries, have been effected. At all events, the world would, in that case, have been spared the anomalous spectacle that has been ever since presented by the two nations;—the one subjected, without being subdued; the other rulers, but not masters; the one doomed to all that is tumultuous in independence, without its freedom; the other endued with every attribute of despotism, except its power.

It can hardly be doubted that Henry was sufficiently aware of the value of Ireland, to have taken more pains in laying the foundations of the English power in that kingdom, had the cares attendant on so vast an extent of dominion, and the anxieties caused by his domestic troubles, allowed him the leisure and thought requisite for such a task. The plan which occurred to him about this time, of investing his youngest son John with the lordship of Ireland, is supposed to have been suggested by the wish to supply, as far as was practicable, the want of the royal presence and sanction, in the administration of that country's affairs.* He might also, in taking this step, have been somewhat influenced by the general rage for subinfudations which naturally prevailed in an age when land was regarded as a source more of power than of revenue, and which, at this period, had converted France into a vast assemblage of fiefs. As his claim to the kingdom of Ireland had originally been founded on a grant from the see of Rome,†

* "Some method to supply, so far as it could be supplied, the want of his presence, was therefore to be sought; and he judged, very truly, that the Irish nation, accustomed through the course of many ages to be governed by princes of an ancient royal blood as any in Europe, would not easily be kept patient under the rule of his servants."—*Lord Lyttelton*, Book 5.

† An anonymous writer thus puts the dilemma in which those kings of England were involved, who set forth the authority of Adrian's Bull as the ground of their claims to the dominion of Ireland:—"Deinde interrogo Anglos an Henricus ille secundus acceperit Hiberniam sibi et successoribus à Romano Pontifice jure feudali necne? Si negant, ad quid pro se citant Bullam illam? Si affirment, ergo Reges Angliæ sunt feudatarii et vassalli. Summi Pontificis, cujus potestatem ad comprimendum regnum agnoscunt, et in cæteris regnant." *Disputat. Apologetica de Jure regni Hiberniæ.* Francfourt, 1645.

to the same source he now thought it right to apply for approval of the intended enfeoffment.* Permission was accordingly granted to him by Alexander III., to bestow that sovereignty either upon John, or any other of his sons he might choose; and, also, to reduce to complete obedience such chiefs of Ireland as might prove refractory.

In prosecution of this object, Henry, about the middle of May in the year 1177, assembled a council of prelates and barons at Oxford, and, in their presence, constituted his son John king of Ireland.† Notwithstanding, however, this solemn announcement of his title, the young prince was never afterwards, in any document that has came down to us, styled otherwise than lord of Ireland, and earl of Moreton. In conformity with this change in the tenure by which that realm was held, Henry confirmed his grant of Meath to Hugh de Lacy, by a new charter, wherein it was set down that this lord for the future, was to hold that province under him and his son; and by the service, not, as before, of fifty only, but of a hundred knights. He also granted, at this time, to Robert Fitz-Stephen and Milo de Cogan, the kingdom of Cork, or, as it was otherwise called, Desmond; to be held of him and his son John, and their heirs,—with the exception of the city of Cork, and the adjoining cantreds,‡ which Henry retained in his own hands, but of which Fitz-Stephen and Cogan were to have the custody for him. It appears, however, that notwithstanding this grant, they acquired possession of but a small part of that territory; and that, two years after, they were obliged to content themselves with but seven cantreds near the city between them both, while no less than twenty-four cantreds remained still out of their power, as well as of the king's,—not having yet been brought under subjection. A. D 1177.

A grant which proved, in the same manner, to be rather nominal than real, was that which Henry made, some time after, of the kingdom of Limerick, or North Munster, to the two brothers of the earl of Cornwall, and Josselin de Pumerai, their nephew. As the granted territory was still in the possession of its rightful ruler, Donald O'Brien, who had shown both the will and the power to defend it to the last, these English lords deemed it most prudent to decline so precarious a gift.§ The same principality, however, was again made the subject of a grant by Henry, who bestowed it as a fief, to be held of him and his son, on Philip de Braosa; and this baron, aided by De Cogan, and Fitz-Stephen, marched an army towards the Shannon, with the view of seizing upon Limerick. But the inhabitants had determined to sacrifice the city rather than suffer it to fall into the hands of the English; and when he advanced to the margin of the river, he beheld Limerick all in flames. Struck by the determined resolution which this act of despair implied, De Braosa, though naturally, as we are told, not wanting in courage, hesitated to advance. In vain did his confederates, De Cogan and Fitz-Stephen, who were well accustomed to such scenes, urge him to accompany them across the river, and offered to build for him a fort, on the other side, from whence he could command the city. Between his own fears‖ and those of his followers—who were the very refuse, it appears, of the population of South Wales—a general panic sprung up among them; and exhibiting a rare instance, it must be owned, of want of courage among the English

* Perquisiverat enim ab Alexandro summo Pontifice quod liceret ei filium suum quem vellet regem Hiberniæ facere et similiter coronare ac regis potentes ejusdem terræ qui subjectionem ei facere nollent debellare. *Bromton.*

† "Oxoniam profectus est, &c. Johannem filium totius Hiberniæ *regulum* facit."—*Polydore Virgil.*

‡ According to Giraldus, a cantred was such a portion of land as usually contains a hundred towns; so that, says Ware, "the quantity of a cantred or century, which is the same with the Saxon hundred, is no way ascertained by any fixed measure; and, as the quantity of a cantred is variable and uncertain, so also is the quantity of a carucate, or plow-land, which is greater or less according to the nature or quality of the soil; though it is commonly reported to be such a portion of land as can give employment to one plow through the year." In a registry of the Abbey of Duisk, Connaught is said to contain only 26 cantreds.

The Welsh had anciently the territorial division of cantrefs, every cantref containing a hundred towns, or 25,600 acres.—*Leges Wallicæ*, quoted by Turner, book 15. c. 3.

The division of the people into hundreds appears to have been a custom of the ancient Germans (*Germans, Tacit.*,) though Murphy, in his diffuse translation of the words "centeni ex singulis pagis sunt," has taken for granted much more than the passage implies. "Each canton," he makes Tacitus say, "sends a hundred; —from that circumstance called hundredors by the army."

The following remarks of Mr. Monk Mason, on the subject of the Irish cantreds, are curious:—"There are strong presumptions, arising from the Irish Topography of Girald. Cambrens., written about 1185, and from other incontrovertible evidences, that a rude survey of Ireland was made by Henry II., in imitation of Doomsday-Book. Girald., speaking of the ancient regal divisions of Ireland into five portions, observes, that each part contains 32 cantreds. When we reflect on the technical word he uses, we may be sure that some degree of accuracy was attended to; for every cantred contained 32 townlands, and every townland, eight carucates." *Parochal Survey.*

§ "Et ideo maxime præfati milites regnum illud de Limeric habere noluerent, quia non dum erat adquisitum, nec subjectum dominio domini regis." *Benedict. Abbas.*

‖ "Their opinion might be prudent," says Lord Lyttelton, "yet it was not in the spirit of the English chivalry, which had enabled a few adventurers of that nation, with infinite odds against them, to make, and keep such great conquests, in different parts of Ireland."

adventurers, they returned, disheartened and in so far disgraced, to rejoin their countrymen at Cork.

Besides the above mentioned grants proceeding immediately from the crown, there were also lands parcelled out, by subinfeudation, from these several territories, by which a number of the other lords engaged in these wars were amply enriched and aggrandized. Thus, to Gilbert de Nogent, the founder of the noble family of Westmeath, Hugh de Lacy conveyed, by charter, the land, or, as afterwards called, barony of Delvin, containing about 20,000 acres; while, at the same time, Robert Fitz-Stephen, out of the lands which had been granted to him in Cork, conveyed to his nephew, Philip de Barry, three cantreds, called Olethan, besides two other cantreds elsewhere; in right of which baronies, the family of De Barry always ranked as parliamentary peers, and in the reign of Charles I. was elevated to an earldom.

Being found deficient in the military talents which the office of deputy required, William Fitz-Aldelm was, in the year 1178, removed from the post, and Hugh de Lacy appointed his successor. Besides the causes already assigned for the unpopularity of his administration, there are grounds for suspecting that his having adopted a somewhat more just and conciliatory policy towards the Irish, was not among the least of those offences by which he forfeited the good will of the colonists; and that, even thus early, any show of consideration for the rights and comforts of the natives was beginning to be regarded with fear and jealousy, as a species of treason towards their masters. "He was the flatterer," says Giraldus, "of rebels, and full of courtesy towards the foe."* "He was a friend," says another, "to the enemies of the state, and a foe to his friends."† The charge advanced against him of having been in the habit of receiving bribes from the Irish, may have had its origin probably in some acts of kindness which he is said to have performed towards the natives, and which his less liberal countrymen endeavoured to tarnish by assigning such unworthy motives for them.

A. D. 1178.

It is necessary to remind the reader that, in the peculiar view here taken of Fitz-Aldelm's policy, I have been led solely by my own conjectures, and by the deductions which, as it appears to me, may fairly be drawn from the very nature and terms of the charges brought against him. That he had not forfeited much of the royal favour by his administration, appears from his appointment, at this time, to the custody of Leinster; that province having, on the decease of Earl Strongbow, fallen to the king, as supreme lord of the fief, during the infancy of the heir. In like manner, Wexford, which had originally been given to Fitz-Aldelm, and then afterwards transferred to Strongbow, was now restored to the former lord; while at the same time Waterford, with its dependencies, was entrusted by the king to Robert Poer.

The event, during Fitz-Aldelm's administration, to which the natives attached most importance, was the removal, by his orders, of the celebrated Staff of Jesus from Armagh to Dublin. This staff or crosier, which was said to have belonged to St. Patrick,‡ and which St. Bernard describes as being, in his time, covered over with gold and set with precious gems, had been for many ages an object of veneration with people; and its removal now, from the cathedral of Armagh to that of Dublin, was but a part of the policy pursued afterwards by the English, of concentrating, as much as was possible, the power and wealth of the Church in Dublin, and diverting it, in proportion, from the see of Armagh. Fitz-Aldelm was also the founder, by order of king Henry, of the famous abbey of St. Thomas the martyr (i. e. Becket,) near Dublin, on the site now called Thomas Court.

* "Rebellium blanditor ..... hosti suavissimus." *Hib. Expug.* l. 2. c. 16.

† "Reipublicæ inimicis amicus, reipublicæ amicis inimicus."—*Stanihurst, de Reb. Hib.* l. 4.

‡ One of the usurpers of the see of Armagh, Nigel M'Aid, carried off with him, on being removed, both this Staff, as we are told by St. Bernard, and the text of the Gospels which had belonged to St. Patrick; and such was the reverence in which these two relics were regarded by the people, that whoever had them in his possession was regarded as the rightful claimant to the see.

CHAPTER XXXI.

John De Courcy defeated in Ulster.—De Lacy again entrusted with the government.—Death of St. Laurence.—Succeeded in the See of Dublin by John Cumming.—Murder of Milo de Cogan and Fitz-Stephen's son.—Arrival of Philip Barry and his brother Gerald.—Hervey of Mount-Maurice retires into a monastery.—Dissensions in the family of Roderic O'Connor.—Philip of Worcester appointed deputy.—Prince John sent to Ireland with a large army.—Insolence of his followers to the Irish Chiefs.—A spirit of Insurrection raised throughout Ireland.—Forts built by the English.—Successfully attacked by the Irish and several barons slain.—John loses almost the whole of his army.—Is recalled by Henry.

John De Courcy, who still continued his warfare in Ulster, met, in the course of this year, with a severe check. He had taken, in a predatory incursion into Louth, a vast number of cattle, and was driving them from thence to his own quarters, when he found himself attacked by the two princes of Oriel and of Ulla; and after a sharp conflict, in which the greater number of his troops were cut off, he was obliged to fly, attended by only eleven horsemen, and continued his retreat for two days and two nights, without either food or rest, till he reached his own castle near Downpatrick. He was likewise unsuccessful in another incursion which he made the same year into Dalaradia.

How invidious and difficult was the task of administering the country's affairs, may be judged from the short period during which each of the deputies was allowed to remain in office. The odium excited, as we have seen, by Fitz-Aldelm's measures, had induced the king to recall him; and now the popularity of his successor awakening in a like degree the royal jealousy, led to a similar result. Hugh de Lacy was, this year, removed from the government, and the office of deputy committed to the joint care of John, constable of Cheshire, and Richard, bishop of Coventry.

Among those acts of De Lacy which had aroused in the king suspicions of his harbouring high and ambitious views, was the marriage he had lately contracted, and without asking the royal permission, with the daughter of Roderic, king of Connaught. But the exclusion of this lord from the favour of his sovereign, was for the present, but of short duration. The ready submission with which he had yielded to his unjust dismissal from office, and the clear explanations he was able to give of the whole of his conduct, completely dissipated the king's suspicions, and after but three months' deprivation of office, he was reinstated in the government;—Robert of Shrewsbury being sent with him, on the part of the king, to act as his counsellor and assistant, and be the witness, or, in plain language, spy, of his proceedings.*

During the remainder of his administration, De Lacy was chiefly employed in building castles for the protection of Leinster, having already sufficiently fortified his own territory of Meath; and more than a dozen names of places, where he now erected castles, will be found enumerated by the chronicler. To this baron's government, at the different periods of his office, has been attributed the singular good fortune of having been popular alike with the English settlers and the natives; and his kind and liberal treatment of the latter is assigned by Giraldus as one of the reasons of the suspicion entertained of his harbouring ambitious designs upon the country:—so difficult was it to depart with impunity from that general system of force and rapine upon which the settlement was, from the first, founded, and by which alone, it was thought, its safety and interests could be upheld. Even De Lacy himself, who was, perhaps, praiseworthy only as compared with his associates, is allowed by the same favourable painter of his character to have been guilty, occasionally, of injustice and tyranny as well as the rest. "By oppressing others with a strong hand," says Giraldus,† "he amply enriched his own followers."

In this year, the saint and patriot, Laurence O'Toole, died at the monastery of Augum, now Eu, on the borders of Normandy. He had been, in the preceding year, one of the

* "Qui Regis exparte coadjutor ei et consiliarius, operumque suorum tesis existeret." *Hibern. Expugnat.* i. 2. c. 22. Leland adds, that it was at Lacy's own request this "inspector" was sent with him, in order "that the king might be thus authentically informed of all his conduct," &c. &c. Leland, who abounds in this sort of secret information refers, in the present instance, to Stanihurst as his authority; but Stanihurst says nothing whatever of any such request having been made.

† "Tam ampla manu alios opprimendo suos ubique ditavit." Hooker entirely omits, in his translation, this single dark shade thrown into De Lacy's character by the chronicler.

six Irish prelates who attended the great council of Lateran,* and had then received from the pope, Alexander III., who had treated him with the distinction and kindness due to his high character, a bull confirming the rights and jurisdiction of the church of Dublin, over the sees of Glendaloch, Kildare, Ferns, Leighlin and Ossory. Some peculiar privileges which, in his zeal for Ireland, he had succeeded in obtaining from that council, were resented, it seems, by Henry, as derogatory to his royal dignity; but there do not appear to be any grounds for the statement, advanced by some writers, that, in consequence of this offence, he was forbidden by the king to return to Ireland; as we find him, after that period, employed actively in the care of his diocess and province, and dispensing those charities and hospitalities around him, which appear to have been as princely in their extent as they were evidently pure and unostentatious in their motive. In A. D. 1180. the course of this year he had accompanied to England a son of Roderic O'Connor who had been sent as a hostage to Henry for the payment of the tribute stipulated between his father and that prince.† Passing afterwards into France, he was seized with a fever, when arrived on the frontiers of Normandy, and expired the 14th of November, 1180.

This pious and eminent prelate, who was styled, as St. Bernard tells us, "the Father of his country,"‡ was of the illustrious house of the O'Tuathals, being the youngest son of Murchertach O'Tuathal, prince of Imaile,§ or, as usually called, the glen of Imaile, in the now county of Wicklow. While yet a boy, he was, by his own desire, dedicated to the ecclesiastical state; and, under the care of the bishop of Glendalough, made considerable progress in learning and piety. When twenty-five years of age, he was elected abbot of the monastery of that place, which was distinct from the episcopal see, and became, within a few years, successively bishop of Glendalough and archbishop of Dublin. The holy seclusion of the Valley of the Lakes, where so large a portion of his earlier days had been passed, still continued to retain a charm for him through life; and it was his delight, when engaged in the cares of his archbishopric, to retire occasionally to Glendalough, and there, in a cave which had been used as an oratory by St. Kevin, to pass whole weeks in lonely prayer and contemplation.‖

The share taken by him in all the most important transactions connected with Ireland which occurred during his public life, has already, from time to time, been noticed in the preceding pages; and it redounds scarcely less to the credit of the English authorities, than to the honour of his own high character, that, notwithstanding his proclaimed zeal for the independence of his native land, and the efforts made by him to awaken in his countrymen a spirit of resistance to the foreigner, he should yet have been selected for so many important and delicate missions to the English court; and, though naturally regarded with jealous suspicion by the king, should have remained to the last in un-

* The other five were, Catholicus, of Tuam; Constantine O'Brian, of Killaloe; Felix, of Lismore; Augustus, of Waterford; and Brictius, of Limerick. The bull granted on this occasion, which is curious, as showing how richly endowed the see of Dublin was at that period, may be found in Usher's *Syllage*, No. XLVIII. Fluery mentions (*Hist. Ecclesiast*, l. 78. § 24.,) that one of the Irish bishops present at this council had for his sole means of subsistence the milk of three cows. It appears, from Hoveden, that there were present at the council several other Irish bishops, besides the six just mentioned; and it is supposed to be one of those that the above improbable tale is related. See Lanigan. chap. 29., § 14. *note* 96.

† "Item, eodem, anno 1180, Laurencius Duvelinensis Archiep. qui ad Dominum regem in Normanniam transfretaverat, adducens secum filium Roderici Reg. Connact. quem idem Rex miserat Domin. suo Reg. Angeliæ, remansurum sibi in obsidem super pactis inter eos contractis de tributo Hiberniæ solvendo." *Benedict. Abbas.*

‡ "Patre patiræ dictus."

§ In the very scarce work of Thomas Carve, of Tipperary, entitled *Lyra, Sive Anacephaleosis Hibernica*, I find, in allusion to St. Laurance's royal descent, the following lines:—

Regius hoc auget patrum Laurentius agmen,
Æternum sedis Dubliniensis honos.

Also in a pastoral letter of Pope Benedict XIV., addressed to the archbishops and bishops of Ireland, in the year 1741, the fame of St. Laurence is thus commemorated:—"Sed et sinceriora pecurrite S. Laurentii Arch. Dublin, quem regis sanguine ortum legatum apostol. in Hiberniam Alexand. III. predecessor noster, in concilio Lateranensi III. selegit, &c. Atque inde facile intelligatis quæ quantaque pro Grege suo vir apostolicus fecerit atque pertulerit." It is not true, however, as stated here, that St. Laurence was ever appointed legate to Ireland. A hymn on St. Laurence, given in Thomas De Burgh's *Officia Propria Sanctorum Hiberniæ*, and more worthy of notice for its truth than its poetry, contains the following deserved tribute to the public character of this eminent man:—

Non favor regum, neque te tumultus
Plebis insanæ, tua sed tot annis
Nota, Laurenti, Pietas ad altos
Vexit honores.

It has been my object, in this note, to collect together a few of the proofs of this eminent Irishman's celebrity, which have escaped the notice of Dr. Lanigan and others. To the forthcoming "Memoirs of the Archbishops of Dublin," by Mr. D'Alton, we may look with the confidence which that gentleman's knowledge of our history and antiquities inspires, for a fuller and more interesting account of the affairs of the Irish Church than has yet appeared.

‖ Vit. Laurent. *ap Messingham.*

disturbed possession both of his popularity and his honours. Even by the slanderer of all other persons and things belonging to Ireland, Laurence is pronounced to have been a "just and a good man."* An ardent lover of his ill-fated country, he felt but the more poignantly those wretched feuds and unnatural treacheries of her own sons, which were now co-operating so fatally with the enemy, in reducing her to complete degradation and ruin; and, a short time before his death he is said to have exclaimed, in the Irish language, "Ah, foolish and senseless people, what is now to become of you? Who will now cure your misfortunes? Who will heal you?" When reminded on his death-bed of the propriety of making his will, he answered, "God knows, I have not at this moment so much as a penny under the sun."† His remains were deposited in the middle of the church of Augum, where they lay till the year of his canonization, by Honorious III., A. D. 1226, when with great solemnity, they were placed over the high altar, and preserved in a silver shrine; some of his relics‡ having been sent to Christ Church, in Dublin, and some to different places in France.

Immediately on receiving the intelligence of Laurence's death, Henry, in exercise of the rights which he held over Ireland, as a realm annexed to the English crown, took the vacant archbishopric into his own custody, and despatched Jeffrey de la Hay, his chaplain to Dublin, for the purpose of seizing on the revenues of the see, and collecting them into the Exchequer. He likewise called together at Evesham, in Worcester, an assembly of the clergy of Dublin, by whom, on his recommendation, a learned Englishman, John Cumming, who had served him in a clerical capacity, was elected archbishop of Dublin. Still more to strengthen the English influence in that country, a bull was procured in the following year from pope Lucius III., exempting the diocess of Dublin from a great part of the jurisdiction hitherto exercised over it by the see of armagh. This memorable bull, the immediate purpose of which was to curtail the privileges of the archbishop of Armagh, but which had also, probably, in view the object of transferring, at some future time, the primacy to the seat of the English power, Dublin, became, in after ages, a subject of fierce and voluminous controversy between the two sees.

One of the earliest, and not least chivalrous, of the English adventurers, Milo de Cogan, who had remained, jointly with his brother in arms, Robert Fitz-Stephen, in quiet possession of the territory granted to them in Desmond, fell a victim at this time to an act of the most foul and revolting treachery. Accompanied by a young and valiant son of Fitz-Stephen, who had lately married his daughter, De Cogan was on his way to a conference with some citizens of Waterford, which was to be held on a plain near Lismore, when he was suddenly attacked by a band of Irish, armed with axes, under a chieftain of the district, named Mac Tyre, by whom he had been invited to pass that night under his roof. Whether from some sudden cause of anger, or, as would seem by the sequel, from a preconcerted design, this chief came, unawares upon De Cogan, as he was sitting carelessly with the young Fitz-Stephen and four other knights upon the grass, and barbarously murdered the whole party.

Scarcely had the news of this event reached Robert Fitz-Stephen, who was then in Cork, when, as if the murder had been meant as a signal for general revolt, A. D. 1182. almost all the chieftains of Munster rose up in arms, and a vast multitude of the people of Desmond, under their king, Dermod Macarthy, laid siege to the town of Cork. In this emergency, Raymond le Gros, apprised of the danger of his kinsman, embarked from Wexford with a band of twenty select knights, and about a hundred other soldiers, partly horsemen, partly archers, and sailing along the coast to Cork, the Irish having no fleet to guard their shores, arrived but just in time to succour Fitz-Stephen, to enable him to repel his assailants, and force them to raise the siege.

As soon as intelligence of these events reached Henry, he sent over Richard de Cogan, the brother of the deceased Milo, to take his place as the associate of Fitz-Stephen in the government, and with this officer was sent a chosen body of troops for the re-enforcement of the garrison. Shortly after, a still farther addition was made to the military strength

* "Laurentius Dubliniensis Episcopus; vir bonus et justus."—Girald Cambrens. *Hibern. Expugnat.* l. 2. c. 23.

The Author of his life, published in Messingham's *Florilegium*, speaks of his munificence in entertaining the rich, as well as of his charity in feeding and succouring the poor. Every day he took care to see fed in his own presence from thirty to sixty poor persons: and, during a famine which lasted for three years, he gave daily alms to 500 people, besides supplying 300 more throughout his diocess with clothes, provisions, and other necessaries. It is added, that during this severe time, 200 children were left at the door of his residence, all of whom were protected and provided for by his care.

† Vit. S. Laurent.

‡ In the Office quoted by Harris, containing a description of these relics, it is said that "the head is kept in a silver case, with a crystal over it, through which may be seen the mark of the wound given him by the madman at Canterbury."—Ware's *Bishops*.

of the province, by the landing of Philip Barry, a nephew of Fitz-Stephen, with a considerable force, from Wales. Besides the object of assisting his relative, Barry had also in view the securing to himself some lands which Fitz-Stephen had granted to him in Olethan, a tract lying between Cork and Youghal. He was accompanied on this occasion by his brother Gerald Barry, a personage better known to fame as Giraldus Cambrensis, having connected his name inseparably with this period of our history, notwithstanding the strange heap of garrulous fiction and slander which he has mixed up with his otherwise useful, and in general trustworthy, records of the first transactions and adventures of the English settlers in this country.*

While of the earliest of these adventurers one or two, as we have seen, had been carried off by death, and most of the others still passed their lives in perpetual warfare, Hervy of Mount Maurice, who had once been as stirring on the scene as any, now withdrew from the turmoils of war to a life of religious seclusion; and, after having, in the year 1182, founded and endowed the abbey of Dunbrody, one of the finest ecclesiastical edifices in the country, he about this time assumed the monk's habit, and entered into the monastery of Christ Church, in Canterbury.† The zeal for founding religious houses had begun to prevail at this time extensively among the great English lords; who, while with one hand they oppressed and plundered the miserable clergy, and despoiled the cathedrals of their possessions, made, with the other, as they thought full atonement for these sacrilegious spoliations, by calling into existence endowments and structures on which their own names were to be imprinted, and in which vanity had, at least as much share as any real religious feeling. About the same time with Dunbrody abbey, were erected in Meath, by Hugh de Lacy, two monasteries for Augustin canons; one at Duleek, and the other at Colp, called anciently Invercolpa, at the mouth of the Boyne.‡

Among the devout soldiers who thus employed themselves in alternately plundering and founding religious houses, John de Courcy was one of the most conspicuous; having founded the Benedictine priory of the island of Neddrum, somewhere off the coast of Down; and also the priory of St. John the Baptist in that county, for a branch of the Augustin canons, called Cruciferi. This lord also turned the secular canons out of the cathedral of Down, and introduced in their place Benedictine monks, from St. Werburgh's, in Chester; while, at the same time, he got the dedication title of the cathedral changed from that of the Holy Trinity to that of St. Patrick,—a step superstitiously believed to be the cause of all the misfortunes that afterwards happened to De Courcy.

The disgraceful feuds which had so long distracted the domestic relations of Roderic O'Conner still continued to rage as violently as ever; but, in order to understand clearly their origin, some brief explanation is necessary. According to the ancient constitution of Ireland, whenever a provincial king was elected to the supreme throne, he resigned the crown of the province to one of his sons, or else to some other of his kin who was entitled as well as qualified to govern. So tottering, however, was the state of the monarchy at the time when Roderic succeeded to the supreme power, that fearing he should be left,—as would have been actually, indeed, his fate,—without either territory or throne, he conceived it most prudent still to retain his own hereditary dominions. Hence the continued efforts of his two sons, Connor and Murchard, to force him to surrender to them the sovereignty of Connaught. One of these sons he had already punished, by inhumanly putting out his eyes; and now the other was in open insurrection against his authority. About the year 1182, such indignation did the unnatural rebellion of these princes excite, that Flaherty O'Meldory, chief of Tyrconnel, marched an army into Connaught to put down their revolt, and gained a complete victory over them and their allies. The slaughter, in this battle, is said to have been immense, and

* Ware, *Annals*, at the year 1183.—Some writers, and among others Prynne, erroneously suppose Giraldus to have accompanied Henry into Ireland. In speaking of the synod of Cashel, Prynne says, "to which (deirus) they all promised conformity, and to observe them for time to come, as Giraldus Cambrensis there present and other historians relate."—*On the Institutes*, c. 76.

† Ware, *Antiq.* chap. 26.—Archdall, *Monast. Hib.* at *Dunbrody*. On giving up his commission in the army, says Mr. Shaw Mason, Hervey "parcelled out the portion of land allotted to him from the water of Wexford to Kempul (Campile) Pill along the sea-coast, for a certain short space in the country, amongst his followers, retaining to himself that portion of it now called the Union of St. James's; and on this he founded the abbey, dedicated it to St. Peter and St. Paul, and established there the order of Cistertian or Bernardine monks." Mr. Mason adds, that Hervey became himself the first abbot of Dunbrody; but I do not find this fact stated by either Ware, Archdall, or Lanigan. For a description of the present remains of this noble abbey, see Brewer's *Beauties of Ireland*.

"Les domaines du connétable Hervé de Montmorency en Irlande, si l'on en excepta ses donations a l'abbaye de Dunbrody, ont tous passé a son neveu et hoir Geoffroi, seigneur de Mariscis, vice-roi d'Irlande en 1215."—*Les Montmorency de France et d'Irlande.*

‡ "The walls of the church here," says Seward, "in ruins, are still to be seen, the arches of which are both in the Saxon and Gothic style; and the east window, which appears older than the rest, is supposed to have made a part of the abbey. On the north side is a small chapel, and to the south two other chapels, one of which is at present the burial place of the family of Bellew."—*Topograph. Hibern.*, 1795.

no less than sixteen of the royal race of Connaught were among the slain on that day. At length, in the year at which we are now arrived, the wretched Roderic, wearied out with the unnatural conflict, agreed, as the only means of bringing it to an end, to surrender the kingdom to his eldest son, Connor Manmoy, and retire into a monastery.

However the transfer by king Henry to his son of a dominion which he himself but partially possessed, might, as a mere matter of form, be considered harmless, the measure adopted by him of actually sending this youth, who was now not more than twelve years of age, to rule over a kingdom requiring, at this crisis, the maturest counsels for its direction, was an act savouring, it must be owned, far more of the whim and wantonness of uncontrolled power, than of that deep and deliberate policy by which all the actions of this great king, even his least temperate, were in general regulated. His suspicious nature, it is true, had been kept in continual alarm by the increasing popularity of Hugh de Lacy; and being, for the third time, about to remove that lord from the government, he looked forward, doubtless, with hope to the effects of the presence of a prince of his blood in that country, as being likely to counteract the dangerous influence now exercised, and help to rally around its legitimate centre, the throne, that popular favour which had been hitherto intercepted by a bold and ambitious subject.

But, whatever may have been his immediate motives for this step, it is clear, from the precautionary measures with which he guarded and fenced it round, that he was by no means unconscious of the dangers contingent on such an experiment. A. D. 1184.

In order to prepare the way for the reception of the young prince, he sent over to Dublin, in the month of August, the new English archbishop of that see, John Cuming; and, in the following month, Philip of Worcester proceeded thither, attended by a guard of forty knights, to take possession of his government, having orders from Henry to send De Lacy over into England, and to await himself in Ireland the coming of prince John. The royal youth was to be accompanied by Ranulph de Glanville, the great justiciary of England, and highly distinguished both as a lawyer and a soldier; while the historian, Gerald of Cambria, who had been sojourning for some time in Ireland, was appointed to attend John, as his secretary and tutor. If the notions impressed by the learned Welshman upon his pupil were at all similar to those he has recorded in his own writings, it is little to be wondered at that the prince and his companions should have been so much prepossessed against the country they were about to visit, and prepared to treat the unfortunate natives with indecent mockery and disdain.

On the last day of March, John, earl of Moreton and lord of Ireland, having been previously knighted by his father at Windsor,* embarked with his attendants at Milford Haven, where a fleet of sixty ships had been prepared to transport a large body of cavalry, of which 400 were knights, together with a considerable force of infantry, chiefly, as it appears, archers; and on the following day, about noon, the royal fleet arrived in the harbour of Waterford. A. D. 1185.

With such an army, added to the forces already in Ireland, a skilful leader, mixing conciliation with firmness, might have established the English power over the whole island. But the conduct of the new deputy, Philip of Worcester, had not been such as to inspire any confidence in the order of things of which he was the precursor. One of the first acts of his government—an act which, whatever might be its strict justice, was far from being calculated to render him popular—was to resume all the lands of the royal demesne, which De Lacy had parcelled out among his own friends and followers, and to appropriate them to the use of the king's household. The next measure of the lord deputy was to march an army into Ulster, a region of adventure hitherto occupied by John De Courcy alone, and where, ever since a victory gained by him, in the year 1182, over Donald O'Lochlin, the spirit of the Irish had been considerably broken. The leader of the present enterprise had evidently no object but plunder and extortion; and from the clergy, more especially, so grinding were his exactions, that even Giraldus, so lenient in general to all misdeeds against the Irish, brands the spoiler with his reprobation. "Even in the holy time of Lent," says this chronicler, "he extorted from the sacred order his execrable tribute of gold."† From Armagh, where, chiefly, these enormities were committed, Philip proceeded to Downpatrick; and a violent fit or pang which seized him

* *Radulf. de Diceto.*—According to the Annals of Margam, it was at Gloucester John was knighted:—"Prius tamen a patre apud Gloucestriam miles effectus."
Diceto, in remarking on the fortunes and situations of the different children of Henry, says, that "John, being secured by the promise and provision of his father, will reduce different parts of Ireland into a monarchy, if it shall hereafter be granted to him;"—that is, adds Sayer, he shall have a kingdom, if he can win it.—*Hist. of Bristol*, chap. x.

† "A sacro clero auri tributum execrabile tam exigens cuam extorquens."—*Hibern. Expugnat.* l. 2. c. 24. Thus gently rendered by the English translator:—"Being well laden with gold, silver, and money, which he had exacted in every place where he came, for other good he did none."

in the course of his journey, is regarded by the writers of the time as a judgment upon him for the wrongs he had just been committing.

From this expedition he was returned but a few days before the arrival of prince John at Waterford, whither the archbishop of Dublin and other English lords had gone to receive the illustrious visiter on his landing. There came likewise, soon after, to wait upon him, many of those Irish chiefs of Leinster who had ever since the time of their first submission been living quietly under the English government, and now hastened to welcome the young prince, and acknowledge him loyally as their lord. But the kind of reception these chieftains experienced showed at the outset how weak and infatuated was the policy of sending a stripling, a mere boy, attended by a train of idle and insolent courtiers, upon a mission involving interests of so grave and momentous a description. Unaccustomed to the peculiar manners and dress of the Irish, their long bushy beards, their hair hanging in glibbes, or locks, down their backs,* the young Norman nobles, who formed the court of John, and who were themselves, to an unmanly degree, attentive to their dress,† broke out in open derision of their visiters; and when the chiefs advancing towards the prince were about to give him, according to the manner of their country, the Kiss of Peace,‡ they found themselves rudely and mockingly repulsed by his attendants, some of whom even proceeded to such insolence as to pluck these proud chiefs by their beards.

To a race and class such as were these princes at this period,—the fading remains of the ancient royalty of the land, and become but the more watchful and exacting in their claims to personal respect, in proportion as the foundation of those claims had grown more unreal and nominal,—to men thus circumstanced, thus proudly alive to the least passing shade of disrespect, it may easily be imagined how far transcending all ordinary modes of provocation was the kind of insult this contemptuous treatment conveyed. Resolved on deadly revenge, they returned immediately to their own homes, withdrew their families and septs from the English territory, and repairing, some to Donald O'Brian, the still untamed foe of the foreigners, others to the chiefs of Desmond and of Connaught, represented the indignities which, in their persons, had been offered to all Ireland; asking, "when such was the manner in which even loyal submission was received, what farther hope remained for the country but in general and determined resistance?"

Some of the chieftains, thus addressed, had been on their way to offer their homage at Waterford; but this news checked at once their purpose. Instead of loyalty, they now breathed only revenge; and, the flame rapidly catching from one to another, a spirit of hostility to the sway of the English sprung up, such as had never been before witnessed since the time of their coming into the country. Agreeing to merge in the common cause all local and personal differences, the chiefs pledged themselves by the most sacred oaths to each other, to stake their lives upon the issue, and "stand to the defence of their country and liberty." While such was the feeling of resistance awakened by the insolent bearing of the young prince's courtiers, the policy in other respects pursued by his government was calculated to aggravate, far more than to soften, this first impression. Nor were the Welsh settlers treated with much less harshness than the native Irish themselves, as they removed these people from the garrison towns in which they had been hitherto stationed, and forced them to serve in the marches. With a severity, too, even more impolitic than it was unjust, they drove from their settlements within the English territory some Irish septs that had long held peaceably those possessions, and divided their lands among some of the newly arrived foreigners. The consequence was, that the septs thus unwisely ejected, joined the ranks of their now arming fellow-countrymen, and took with them not only a strong accession of revengeful feeling, but also a knowledge of the plans and policy of the enemy, an acquaintance with his strong and weak points of defence, and every requisite, in short, that could render them useful, as informers and guides, in the momentous struggle about to be hazarded.

While thus threatening was the aspect of the public mind, the advisers of the prince pursued unchecked their heedless career. Whether trusting to the people's divisions among themselves, as likely to avert the danger threatened by the league of their chiefs, or unable to awaken in John and his dissolute Normans any thought but of their own

* "The Irish," says Ware, "wore their hair (by the moderns called glibs) hanging down their backs." "Proud they are (says Campion) of long crisped glibbes, and do nourish the same with all their cunning; to crop the front thereof they take it for a notable piece of villany."

† In Camden's Remains we find them described as "all gallant, with coats to the mid-knee, head shorn, beard shaved, arms laden with bracelets, and faces painted." Lingard, in the same manner represents the Norman's as "ostentatiously fond of dress," but describes their hair as worn long and curled.

‡ This ceremony of the Kiss of Peace was observed also in Richard II.'s reign, when that monarch received, by his commissioner, the earl marshal, the homage and fealty of the Leinster chieftains.

reckless indulgence,—* whatsoever was the cause, the attention of the government appears to have been but little directed to the gathering storm;† and the erection of three forts or castles at Tipperary, Ardfinnan, and Lismore, was the only measure for the security of their power, which the incapable advisers of the prince had yet adopted. Even these castles, however, were not left long unassailed. That of Ardfinnan, built upon a rock overlooking the Suir, was attacked by Donald O'Brian, prince of Limerick, and its small garrison put to the sword. In Ossory, Roger de Poer, a young officer of brilliant promise, was cut off: while, in an assault upon Lismore, the Brave Robert Barry, one of those who had accompanied Fitz-Stephen into Ireland, was taken and slain. In various other quarters, the incursions of the natives were attended with equal success; and two other English leaders, Raymond Fitz-Hugh, who fell at Olechan, and Raymond Canton, slain at Odrone, were added to the victims, which the outraged feelings of the people now offered up in bitter revenge for their wrongs.‡

On the other hand, an attack upon Cork, by Mac Carthy of Desmond, was so vigorously resisted by Theobald Walter, the chief butler, who had accompanied John into Ireland, that the Irish prince and the whole of his party were slain in the encounter. A like success awaited the arms of the English in Meath, into which district, defying the measures for its defence adopted by Hugh de Lacy, the septs on its western borders made now a desperate inroad; but were repulsed with immense slaughter by William Petit, a feudatory of De Lacy, who sent 100 heads of the slain, as a trophy of his victory, to Dublin. Notwithstanding these occasional successes on the part of the invaders, the general fortune of the war was decidedly in favour of the natives; and according to the chronicles of the English themselves, John lost, in the different conflicts with the Irish, almost his whole army.§ At length, informed of the imminent danger with which the very existence of his power in that realm was threatened, Henry sent over orders instantly, recalling the prince and his headlong advisers to England, and placing the whole power of the government, both civil and military, in the hands of De Courcy.

Though a liegeman of De Lacy had in the late warfare, acted so loyally, complaints of that lord himself were forwarded to England by John and his ministers, representing him as actuated by feelings of jealousy towards their government for having superseded his own, and as exerting the whole of his great talent and influence for the purpose of thwarting and bringing disgrace on their measures. It was believed, also, that this baron had, among his own vassals and partisans, assumed the title of king of Meath, receiving tribute in that character from Connaught; and had even proceeded so far in this assumption as to order a regal crown to be made for his own head.‖ But, whatever grounds there may have been for these charges, De Lacy did not live to be called upon to answer to them,—having met his death this year from a hand so obscure, that not even a name remains associated with the deed.¶

He had been engaged for some time in erecting a castle at a place called Darmaigh, in the southern part of ancient Meath, upon a spot hallowed in the eyes of the natives, as being the site of a monastery founded by their great saint, Columba. Being in the habit of attending personally to the building, De Lacy had gone forth to inspect the outworks, attended but by three English soldiers and an Irish labourer; and just as he was in the act, we are told, of stooping down to mark out the line of some wall or trench, the Irish workman drew forth a battle-axe which he had brought, concealed beneath his mantle for the purpose, and at one blow smote off the baron's head. The assassin escaped into a neighbouring wood, and being doubtless favoured in his flight by the country people, contrived to elude all persuit.** A. D. 1186.

On hearing of this event, at which he is said to have openly rejoiced, the first step of

* "All that authority," says lord Lyttelton, "over the minds of the Irish, which the courtesy, gravity, and prudence of Henry, during his abode in their island, had happily gained, was lost in a few days by the petulent levity of John and his courtiers; the good will of that people, on which Henry had desired to establish his dominion, being instantly turned into a national hatred."

† The abbot of Peterborough attributes a great part of the failure of John's enterprise to the desertions of the soldiers of his army to the ranks of the Irish, in consequence of their pay having been withheld from them, and embezzled:—"Sed ipse Johannes parum ibi profecit, quia pro defectu indigenarum qui eum eo tenere debebant et pro eo quod stipendia militibus et solidariis suis dare noluit."

‡ Hibern. Expugnat. l. 2. c. 34.

§ "Fere amisit totum exercitum suum in pluribus conflictibus quo sui fecerant contra Hybernienses."—*Benedict Abbas.*

‖ "Videbaturque sibi jam magis quam regi Anglorum regnum Hybernicum æmulari, in tantum ut diadema sibi regium parasse diceretur."—*Gulielm. Neubrig.* l. 3. c. 9.

¶ Gulielm. Neubrig. *ut supra.* Several names have been assigned to the perpetrator of this act, but all differing so much from each other, as to show that the real name was unknown. Geoffry Keating, with that love of dull invention which distinguished him, describes the assassin as a young gentleman in disguise.

** Gulielm. Neubrig. *ut supra.* Ware's Annals, ad ann. 1186.

the king was to order John to return into Ireland, for the purpose of taking possession of De Lacy's castles and lands, during the nonage of that baron's eldest son Walter. But the death of Geoffry, duke of Bretagne, the third son of the king, who was carried off at this time by a fever, prevented an experiment which would have most probably ended but in a repetition of the former failure and disgrace.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Review of the steps taken by Henry for the transfer of Ireland to John.—Translation of the relics of the three great Irish Saints.—Exploits of De Courcy in Ulster.—Death of Henry the second.—Remarks on the arguments of Molyneux and others respecting the transfer of the dominion of Ireland to John.—De Courcy resents the appointment of De Lacy as deputy.—Cathal of the bloody hand gains the kingdom of Connaught.—Is joined by the princes of Thomond and Desmond.—Accession of Richard I.—Hugh De Lacy, son of the first lord of Meath, appointed deputy.—Affairs of Connaught.—Defeat of the English by Donald O'Brian.—Perfidy of O'Brian.—His death.—Rapid change of Deputies.—Insurrection of the Irish.—Successes of Mac Carty of Desmond.—Death of Roderic O'Connor.—Low state of Irish Literature at this period.—Remarks on Giraldus.

On the subject of Henry's grant of the realm of Ireland to his son John, and the supposed effects of that measure, as regarded the political relations between the two countries, a question has been more than once raised, among constitutional lawyers, upon which it may be expected that I should here offer some remarks. But a more direct opportunity will occur for considering this controversy when we come to notice the events of the subsequent reign. Mean while, a brief review of the steps taken, at different times, by Henry, towards such a transfer of his Irish dominion, may put the reader more clearly in possession of the bearings of the question that has since arisen out of that measure; and will also show that Henry himself was not without doubts as to the safety and policy of the step. His relinquishment, indeed, of the design originally entertained by him of bestowing upon John the title of king, arose, most probably, from the apprehension that the establishment of a separate sovereignty over that country might, at some future time, be assumed as a ground for questioning the dependence of Ireland on the English crown. On no other supposition is it easy to account for the great uncertainty of purpose exhibited by him on this point. Thus, though, in the year 1177, he actually intended to make this boy king of Ireland, and caused him, with the pope's permission, to be so declared by a council or parliament at Oxford, it is yet clear, from numerous records, that John took no other title than that of lord of Hibernia. Notwithstanding this, when he was about to proceed to that country, in 1185, application was made by his father to pope Lucius III., requesting that he would allow the young prince to be crowned; but the pope, for what reason is not known, refused his consent. On the accession, however, of Urban III., the same request, it appears, was renewed; for that pontiff, shortly after his election, granted permission to Henry to crown any one of his sons whom he should choose king of Ireland, and, at the same time, sent him, as a mark of his peculiar favour, a crown made of peacock's feathers interwoven with gold. In reply to this gracious communication, Henry named to the pope his youngest son John, and requested that a legate should be sent to assist at his coronation. On the arrival, however, of the cardinal Octavian for that purpose, the king, who in the mean time had given up his project of sending John again into Ireland, abandoned likewise all intention of crowning him.

A. D. 1186. The year 1186 was rendered memorable in our ecclesiastical annals, by the translation of the remains of the three great national saints, Patrick, Columba, and Brigid, which had been discovered in Down in the preceding year. The pious bishop of that see, Malachy, used frequently, we are told, to implore of God, in his devotions, that he would vouchsafe to point out to him the particular place or places in which the bodies of these saints lay concealed. While thus employed, one night, in the cathedral of Down, he saw a light, like a sunbeam, traversing the church, and at length

resting at a spot where, upon digging, the bones of the three bodies were found.* This discovery having been reported to John de Courcy, then lord of Down, it was determined that messengers should be despatched to pope Urban III., for the purpose of procuring his permission to remove or translate these relics to some part of the church more worthy to receive them. The pope accordingly sent over as his legate on the occasion cardinal Vivian, who was already well acquainted with Down and its clergy; and, on the 9th of June, the relics of the three saints, having been put into distinct boxes, or coffins, were removed, with the usual solemnities, to a more distinguished part of the church, and there deposited in one monument.†

John de Courcy, now left to encounter the whole brunt of the Irish struggle almost alone, owed the success which in general attended his arms far less to his own and his small army's prowess, than to the wretched feuds and divisions which distracted the multitudes opposed to him; who, instead of following the rare example set by the chieftains of the south, and reserving, by a truce among themselves, their combined hostility for the oppressor, still continued their mutual broils and feuds, and, in the very face of the common enemy, thought only of flying upon each other. In the year 1187, O'Loghlin, prince of Tirone, was, after a sanguinary struggle, deposed from his throne; but the prince who succeeded him, Roderic O'Lachertair, had but a brief tenure of his ill-got power, as, in a few months after his accession, when in the act of ravaging and despoiling the county of Tircounel, this usurper was put to death, and the rightful ruler restored. Nor was it long before O'Loghlin himself fell on the field, but in a cause far more worthy of an ancient national chief. Having been attacked at Cavan-ne-cran, by the English garrison of the castle of Mogcava, he gained, after a desperately fought action, a complete victory over them, but was himself killed by an English arrow in the moment of triumph. About the same time O'Cavenan, king of Tirconnel, attacked by surprise when on a journey, by Flahertach O'Medory, another of these petty princes, was, together with his brother and a number of servants, treacherously murdered.‡ A. D. 1187.

Those who thus recklessly made war upon their own countrymen would not scruple, of course, to aid the enemy in the same cause; and we find, in the same year, a native chieftain, Cornelius O'Dermot, leagued with De Courcy in an invasion of Connaught, whither that lord had been invited by a faction within the province, for the purpose of deposing from the sovereignty Connor Manmoy, to whom his father, the feeble Roderic, had, some few years before, surrendered the reins of power. The province of Connaught had been active in the revolt against John, and this treacherous invitation now opened to De Courcy a means of reducing it to obedience. The son of Roderic, however, had secured the aid of the brave and indefatigable Donald O'Brian, and their united armies engaging De Courcy, who had not counted on so formidable a resistance, forced him to retreat precipitately from Connaught.§ Then, putting down the rebellious faction he had come to assist, they re-established the authority of Connor on apparently secure grounds.

The very next year, however, some of the nearest friends of this prince, having joined in a conspiracy against him with the late vanquished party, he was, between both factions, basely murdered. Nor even then did the curse of discord cease to hang around that ill-fated house; as, for many a year after, Connaught continued to be torn and convulsed by the remains of this unnatural strife; while the fallen monarch, Roderic O'Connor, still lived to witness, from his melancholy retreat at Cong, the merited judgments which a long course of crime and dissention was now bringing down on his ill-starred realm and race. A. D. 1189.

Whatever hope might still have been cherished, by those who looked to Ireland, with other views than of mere plunder, that Henry might yet find leisure to apply himself to the peaceful settlement of a country, which, according to the policy now pursued towards it, was to become either the prop and ornament, or the disgrace and burden, of England, such slight opening of hope was now closed for ever by the death of this powerful king, which took place in the month of July 1189, at the castle of Chinon, in Normandy;—the event being embittered, if not accelerated, by his discovery of the base treachery, and ingratitude towards him, of his favourite son, John. He died, say the historians, cursing his children.

The period of Anglo-Irish history—for of this mixed character has my task now be-

* *Officium Translationis, &c.*, of which a portion is given by Usher, *Primord. Eccles.* 989.—"Et cum nocte quâdam instantissime in Ecclesia Dunensi sic oraret, vidit quasi radium solis per ecclesiam, et usque ad locum sepulturæ dictorum sanctorum corporum perlustrantem."

† Lanigan, ch. xxx. § 8.

‡ Ware's Annals, ad. ann. 1188.

§ Ware's Annals, *ut supra*. Vallancey's *Laws of Tunistry*.

come—upon the borders of which we are arrived, may safely be hurried over both by the historian and his readers, through more than one century of its course, without losing much that either the pen or the memory can find any inducement to linger upon or record. However wanting in distinctness and interest may have been the details of Ireland's struggle with the Danes, and however confused, occasionally, from factious alliances, may have been the relations between the two parties, it is certain that each is, in general, found in its own natural sphere of action, and pursuing the course that might be expected from it, whether of aggression or resistance; while the ultimate result was such as reason, humanity, justice, must all approve—namely, the triumph of the people of the land, in defence of their own soils, and the utter rout and expulsion of their insolent invaders.

In the course, of affairs however, which we are now about to contemplate, all is reversed, preposterous, and unnatural,—wholly at variance, not only with right, but even with the ordinary course of injustice and wrong. The people of Ireland, the legitimate masters of the soil, disappear almost entirely from the foreground of their country's history, while a small colony of rapacious foreigners stand forth usurpingly in their place. Expelled, on the one hand, as enemies and rebels, from their rightful possessions, by the English, and repulsed, on the other, as intruders, by the native septs, into whose lands they were driven,* a large proportion of the wretched people, thus rendered homeless and desperate, were forced to fight for a spot to exist upon, even in their own land. Compared with the fate, indeed, of the miserable multitudes whom we shall find from time to time dispossessed by the English extermination would have been mercy.

To second the sword in this mode of governing, the weapon of the legislator was also resorted to, and proved a still more inhuman because more lingering, visitation. Giving a name to its own work, the Law called "enemies" those whom its injustice had made so; and, for the first time in the annals of legislation, a state of mutual hostility was recognised as the established relationship between the governing and the governed. While such was the sad history of the people themselves, through many a dark age of suffering and strife, the acts of the rulers by whom so rampant a system of tyranny was administered will be found no less odious to remember, no less painful to record; though in so far pregnant with lessons of warning, as showing what penalties wait upon wanton misrule, and how sure a retribution tyranny provides for itself in the rebound of its own wrong.

The kindly feelings of Richard I. towards his unworthy brother, John, were shown not more in the favours and dignities so prodigally lavished upon him both in Normandy and England, than in the easy and generous confidence with which he still left him in unrestricted possession of the grant of the lordship over Ireland, which had been bestowed on him by the late king. With the slight exception, indeed, of the mention of Ireland among those parts of the British dominions for which he requested a legate to be appointed by Pope Clement III., Richard appears not to have at all interfered with that country during his short, chivalrous reign. It is to be observed, however, that, in the pope's rescript complying with this request, the range of the legate's authority in Ireland is limited strictly to those parts of the country "in which John, earl of Mortagne, the brother of the king, has power or dominion." We find the same terms employed in a charter of franchises granted at this period by John himself. While, in other instruments conferring immunities and privileges, he acknowledges, in like manner, the subordinacy of his own power, by annexing exceptions and reservations of all that belonged or related to the English crown.

Allusion has been made, in the preceding chapter, to a question raised in later times, respecting the consequences of Henry's grant of the kingdom of Ireland to his son John,—a question which, at more than one crisis of our history, has been agitated with a warmth and earnestness which could be infused into it only by the political spirit and ferment of the moment.† By one of the parties in this controversy it has been contended that the act of Henry, in making his son king of Ireland, produced a great and fundamental

* "The septs that were thus expelled from their habitations in vain sought an asylum in the more inaccessible parts of the country, since hostile septs, to which they were as invaders, opposed their inroads."—Brodie, *History of the British Empire*. Introduction.

† The first instance, I believe, of any decided difference of opinion on this point, occurs in the decisions of the judges of England, on the precedent of the Staple Act (2 Hen. VI.,) when to the question, "Whether the Staple Act binds Ireland?" two directly opposite opinions were given, on the two several occasions when the case was brought under their consideration. The opinion pronounced, however, by the chief justice Hussey on the last of these two occasions, and to which all the other judges assented, was, that "the statutes made in England did bind those of Ireland;"—a view of the case confirmed, in later times, by the high authority of chief justice Cook, and likewise of sir John Davies.

The first public controversy to which the question gave rise, was that which took place on the passing of the Act of Adventurers, 17 Car. I., between sir Richard Bolton (or, rather, Patrick Darcy, assuming that name) and sergeant Maynart, whose respective pamphlets on the subject may be found in Harris's *Hibernica*. At the close of the same century, the question was again called into life by Molyneux, in behalf of the Irish woollen manufacture, and received new grace and popularity from his manner of treating it. About fifty years later

change in the relations between the two kingdoms; that, by this transfer, he had superseded or voided whatever claim he could pretend to, from conquest, over Ireland, leaving it to all intents a separate and independent kingdom;* while, by the introduction among that people, as well in his own reign as in that of his son John, of the laws and institutions of England, they were provided with the means of internal government, and thereby exempted from all dependence on the English legislature.

This view of the question, though leading to conclusions which cannot but be welcome to all advocates of Ireland's independence, is, unluckily, destitute of foundation in historical fact. The title of king of Ireland, bestowed on the young prince, was, as we have seen, withdrawn almost as soon as announced; and though Henry afterwards again contemplated the same step, and had even a legate sent over from Rome to assist at his son's coronation, the same misgivings again came over him, and he abandoned the project;† apprehending, perhaps, from the actual possession of the title by John, those very pretentions which afterwards arose from the mere presumption of his having been invested with that title.‡

It may be said that, though John was styled only "Lord of Hibernia," none of the succeeding kings of England took any higher title, and yet were not the less invested with regal authority over that country. But, to put his son independently in possession of that power, Henry must have surrendered all hold of it himself; and that he did not do so, is abundantly proved by all the subsequent acts and instruments of his reign, by his appointment of all the ministers and officers of the government in Ireland, by his recalling from that country the young Lord of Hibernia himself, and committing the charge and command of the kingdom to John de Courcy in his stead. He also made numerous grants of lands in that realm, some to be held of himself alone and his heirs, others by tenure of him and John and their heirs; still reserving, in all these grants, certain services to himself, and thus clearly establishing that in him the right and title of the property lay.

While thus weak are the grounds derived from the supposed kingship of John, for regarding Ireland at this time as a distinct and independent kingdom, the inferences drawn from the alleged introduction into that realm, of the laws and institutions of England,—thereby enabling, as it is said, the Irish people to legislate for themselves,—are no less fallacious and unsubstantial.

In order to give dignity to this supposed dawn of English legislation in Ireland, the Curia Regis, or Common Council, held by Henry at Lismore, is styled, prematurely, a Parliament,—that term not occurring even in English records till towards the middle of the 13th century; while, in order to instruct his new subjects in the art of law making, a sort of Formulary, still extant, containing rules and directions for the holding of parliaments, is pretended to have been transmitted by him to Ireland for that purpose.§

The claims of this document to so high an antiquity, though sustained by no less an authority than sir Edward Coke, were shown satisfactorily by Prynne, Selden,‖ and others, to be wholly without grounds. Notwithstanding which, it was again, at a later period, appealed to by Molyneux in proof of the antiquity of Irish parliaments; and again, with equal ease and success, was set aside by his various opponents in the controversy. The

the Irish demagogue, Lucas, revived the topic, in his own coarse but popular strain. Nor has the subject, even in our own times, been permitted to slumber; as a learned argument in favour of Darcy's and Molyneux's view of the question has appeared, not long since, from the pen of Mr. Monck Mason.

* "We shall observe that by this donation of the kingdom of Ireland to king John, Ireland was most eminently set apart again as a separate and distinct kingdom by itself from the kingdom of England."—*Molyneux.*

It is not a little curious that chief justice Coke should have been of the very same opinion with Molyneux, as to Ireland being "a distinct dominion separate from the kingdom of England," though drawing so perfectly different a conclusion from it;—adding, "Yet the title thereof being by conquest, the same by judgment of law might, by express words, be bound by the parliaments of England." Sir John Davies, with far more consistency, in asserting the power of the English parliament to bind this country, so far from considering Ireland as a distinct, separate kingdom, pronounces her to be but "a member appendant and belonginge, or unyted and annexed to the imperial crowne of England." See his speech, in 1613, as speaker of the Irish house of commons, first published by Leland, in the Appendix to his second volume.

† In the face of this historical fact, Molyneux persists, for the sake of his argument, in giving to John the title of king throughout.—See preceding note. In a similar manner, he says elsewhere, "During which space of twenty-two years, both whilst his father Henry II., and his brother Richard I, were living and reigning, *king* John made divers grants and charters to his *subjects*," &c. &c.

‡ On John's own seal, of which Speed has given an engraving, no higher title is assumed than that of Lord of Hibernia; "Sigillum Johannis filii Regis, Domini Hiberniæ." It is strange that Prynne, with all these facts before his eyes, should have committed the mistake of asserting that John, created king of Ireland by his father at Oxford, "enjoyed that title till his death."—*On the Institutes*, c. 76.

§ "*Modus tenendi Parliamentum*," &c. This record is given, at length, in Harris's *Ware*, chap. 13.

‖ Selden pronounces it to be "a late imposture of a bold fancy, not exceeding the reign of Edward III." (*Titles of Honour.*) See Prynne (on the *Fourth Part of the Institutes*) for the numerous proofs he brings against the antiquity and authority of this document.

original roll of this record, which was in the possession of Molyneux himself, and which he had before him, as he states, while writing his "Case of Ireland," is now lost; and how far even the exemplification of this roll, said to have been made in the 6th year of Henry V., may be received as authentic, is yet a farther question. But enough of incongruities and anachronisms have been pointed out in the substance of the "Modus" itself, to disqualify it totally as authentic evidence respecting the times to which its pretended date refers.

The great and leading mistake, however, of those now obsolete champions of Ireland's independence, who appealed in its behalf to the Anglo-Norman code, was their overlooking the fact, that, from all this boasted system of law and polity introduced by the invaders into the country, the natives themselves were entirely excluded; that neither at the period where we are now arrived, nor for many centuries after, were the people of Ireland, properly speaking, the native inhabitants of the land, admitted to any share whatever in the enjoyment of those foreign institutions and privileges which yet have been claimed, in their most unrestricted form, for the Ireland of modern days, on the sole presumption of their having been at that period her own. It will be found, as we proceed, that within the narrow circle of the Pale alone were confined, for many centuries, all the advantages resulting from English laws;* and the few instances that occur, from time to time, of the admission, at their own request, of some natives of Ireland to this privilege, only show, by the fewness and formality of the exceptions, how very general and strict was the exclusion.†

At what period parliaments, properly so called, began to be held by the English in Ireland, there appear no means of ascertaining; but it is the opinion of sir J. Davies,‡ that for 140 years after the time of Henry II., there was but one parliament for both kingdoms, and that the councils held occasionally, by the Lords of the Pale, during that interval, were, as he expresses it, rather Parlies than Parliaments. Neither were the interests of the English settlement left wholly unrepresented during that period, as we learn from the records of the reigns of the first three Edwards that Ireland sent representatives to the English parliament under all those kings.§

It has been naturally an object with those who have adopted the views of Molyneux on this subject, to prove that parliaments were among the very earliest of the institutions bestowed on Ireland by her new masters; because, in a separate and self-willed legislature, they found a mark of that disjunction and separateness of the two realms which forms a vital part of their theory; and because, during whatever interval the new kingdom may have been left unprovided with a parliament of its own, it must, for that period, be held to have been subject to the Statute Laws of England, and the theory of its independence and self-government must, in so far, be relinquished.‖

There are yet a few other points connected with Molyneux's view of the history and attributes of the Irish parliament, which shall be noticed as cases arise which require recurrence to the subject. But it may be adverted to here, as at least curious, that

* With reference to a writ sent by Henry III., in the thirtieth year of his reign, to the archbishops and others in Ireland, for the strict observance of the laws of England in that country, Prynne says, "Yet, notwithstanding, this privilege of using the laws of England in Ireland was never intended by king John nor king Henry to extend to all the native Irish in general, but only to the English inhabitants transplanted thither, or there born, and to such native Irishmen as faithfully adhered to these kings, and the English in Ireland, against the Irish rebels."

† Among the records in the Roll's Office, Dublin, are many of these licenses granted to particular Irish to use the English laws; some of them being Irish women, whose husbands were English. Thus, for instance, "Quia Rado Burges (Anglico qui Hib' continue moratr) maritata est qd ipa et hedes sui utantr legib' Anglic'."—See *Inquisit in Office. Rotul Cancellar. Hibern., &c.* Several of such records of licenses to use the English laws are given by Prynne, chap 76.

‡ This assertion may, doubtless, admit of dispute; and Mr. Mason has produced some instances of councils held in Ireland in the reigns of Edward I. and Edward II., to which the name of Parliament may fairly be allowed. "In the third of Edward II.," he says "previous to the period fixed upon by sir J. Davies for the commencement of Irish legislation, there was a parliament in Ireland, the enactments of which were printed by sir Richard Bolton (the chief baron that was cotemporary with sir John Davies,) in his edition of Irish Statutes, A. D. 1621."

§ It is clear that Molyneux, though, in one sense, so warm a champion of Ireland's independence, would have hailed a Union, such as now exists between the two countries, with welcome. In noticing the fact above stated, he says:—"If from these last mentioned records it be concluded that the parliament of England may bind Ireland, it must also be allowed that the people of Ireland ought to have their representatives in the parliament of England. And this, I believe, we should be willing enough to embrace:—but this is a happiness we can hardly hope for."

‖ To this obvious objection Molyneux necessarily laid himself open, by acknowledging that till the time of Henry III., no regular legislature had yet been established in Ireland. He likewise not merely admits, but demonstrates, that from the ninth of Edward I., to the fiftieth of Edward III., a period occupying about a century, the representatives of Ireland came over to sit in the parliament of England;—a fact which, concurring with the absence of all evidence as to any councils having been held previously in Ireland, except that memorable one convoked by Henry II., at Lismore, seem strongly to corroborate the opinion advanced by sir John Davies respecting the time when a regular legislature was first established in this country.

writers, whose object it is to prove that the parliament of England was entitled neither by right or precedent to bind by its acts the people of Ireland,* should yet have taken as the main foundation of their argument the act of a parliament at Oxford, which, without any reference whatever to the consent of the people affected by its legislation, constituted a youth of only twelve years of age king of Ireland.

The solemn enactment, in our own times, of a legislative union between the two countries, would seem to have reduced the question, here noticed, to a mere theme of curious historical speculation; and certainly, on no slight grounds should the claims of Ireland to legislative independence be again put forth as a practical question. But should the course of political events ever bring back into public discussion a subject now quietly left to repose in the page of the historian and the antiquary, the right of Ireland to legislate for herself must assuredly be asserted on some more tenable grounds than the obsolete grant of her realm to a stripling king, or the occasional pretensions of the English parliament of the Pale.

The deputy appointed by John to the government of this country, on the accession of his brother Richard, was Hugh de Lacy, son of the first lord of Meath; in consequence of which, John de Courcy, finding himself, unfairly, as he thought, supplanted, retired dissatisfied to his own possessions in Ulster, and there assumed, in the midst of his followers, a tone and attitude of independence which threatened danger to the English interests in that quarter. In the mean while the native princes, encouraged by the diversion to the shores of the East, under Richard's banner, of the energies and resources of England, began to form plans among themselves of combined warfare against the foreigners, and even to suspend their intestine quarrels for the general object of crushing the common foe. In Connaught, where still some lingering pretensions to the sovereignty were kept alive, two of the ill-fated race of O'Connor were at this time contending for the barren prize; and a battle fought between the two factions, in which each could boast of English auxiliaries in its ranks, terminated in favour of Cathal O'Connor, called, from the number of battles fought by him, O'Connor of the Bloody Hand. With the strange notions of piety prevalent in those times, when the God of peace was made a party in every sanguinary feud, this devout warrior founded an abbey on the spot where the battle was won, and called it, in remembrance of that fortunate event, the Abbey of the Hill of Victory. A. D. 1190.

Among the chiefs who agreed at this crisis to postpone their mutual feuds, and act in concert against the enemy, were O'Brian of Thomond, and Mac Carthy of Desmond, hereditary rulers of north and south Munster, and chiefs respectively of the two rival tribes, the Dalcassians and the Eugenians. By a truce now formed between these princes, O'Brian was left free to direct his arms against the English; and, having attacked their forces at Thurles, in O'Fogarty's Country, gave them a complete overthrow, putting to the sword, add the Munster Annals, a great number of their knights. We have seen already how deeply the course and character of this warlike chief were marked with the taint of those habits of treachery which a long life of faction is sure to engender. Notwithstanding the truce he had now entered into with Mac Carthy, we find him, at no long interval after, encouraging secretly the views of the English on that prince's possessions, and even allowing them to erect a fort, the castle of Breginnis, within his own territories, to protect and facilitate their hostile incursions into the teritory of his rival.†

While some of the natives were thus bringing disgrace on the Irish name, the English colonists had begun, even thus early, to exhibit symptoms of that state of degeneracy and insubordination into which at a later period we shall find them so shamefully sunk. The independent position assumed by De Courcy on his usurped territory, setting at de-

* Among the countless dilemmas and embarrassments which would arise practically out of such a state of relationship between the two countries as Molyneux's theory would establish, that which must arise on the accession of a new monarch to the throne of England is thus keenly put by the ablest and acutest of his opponents, Carey, a merchant of Bristol. Molyneux having allowed that a king declared by the parliament of England, though he was not king before such declaration, becomes thereby, ipso facto, king of Ireland, the Bristol merchant thus entangles him in his own argument:—"Is it any better than contradiction to hold that a king of England, as created or declared in a parliament of England, is thereby, or at the same instant, king of Ireland, and yet that Ireland is a kingdom so complete in itself, that he is no king till the act of parliament, creating or declaring him king, is confirmed by a parliament in Ireland? Or, take it the other way,—no act of parliament in England is of any force till confirmed in Ireland; and yet a king declared by a parliament of England, though he was not king before such declaration, is thereby, or ipso facto, king of Ireland;—that is, an act of parliament of England is not of *force* in Ireland till confirmed *there*, and yet is of force, ipso facto, by being enacted *here*. Does it not, therefore, follow that such an annexation of Ireland to the crown of England as makes the king of England, ipso facto, king of Ireland, destroys the supposition that their parliaments have authority to confirm or reject laws made by the legislature of England? or otherwise, that the supposition of such an authority in the parliament of Ireland destroys that annexation which Mr. Molyneux himself yields?"

† It is to be regretted that Dr. Lanigan should have suffered his nationality to prevail so far over his sense of right and wrong, as to lead him, in recording the death of O'Brian, to call him "that *good* and brave prince."—Chap. xxxi. § 10.

fiance the delegate of royalty,—the spectacle of English soldiers opposed to each other in the ranks of contending Irish chieftains,—these and a few other such anomalies, which began to present themselves, at this period, were but the foretaste of evils inevitably yet to come; the first stirring of embryo mischiefs which time and circumstances brought, at a later period, to baneful maturity.

A. D. 1194. In the year 1194 died Donald O'Brian, king of Thomond and Ormond,—a prince, whose mixture of warlike and religious propensities rendered him popular alike among the laity and the clergy of the country. The wrong done by him to the cause of Irelands independence, by being among the first of the native princes who proffered submission to Henry II., was in some degree atoned for, though never to be repaired, by the vigour and obstinacy of his resistence afterwards to the English, on finding that their object was to make of himself and his brother princes not merely tributaries but slaves. One of the last acts of his long and stormy life was, as we have seen, to add to the redeeming portion of his long career, by a brilliant victory over the invaders. He was succeeded in the principality by his eldest son, Mortogh Dall, a chief who had, in like manner, tarnished his name by defection from the national cause, having been the first that introduced the English into Munster (1177,) and for the old, factious purpose of employing them as auxiliaries against his own kinsmen and neighbours, the Eugenians of Desmond.

Of the numerous religious houses established by Donald O'Brian, a due and grateful remembrance is cherished in our ecclesiastical annals. Besides several monastic foundations, he established a nunnery for Augustin canonesses at Kiloen, in the Barony of Islands; and formed also an establishment, under the name of St. Peter, in the city of Limerick, for black nuns of the order of St. Augustin.* To him also Limerick and Cashel were indebted for their respective cathedrals;—his own palace having been bestowed upon the Church for the foundation of the former structure,† while the great cathedral of Cashel‡ was erected by him, adjoining king Cormac's chapel, which beautiful building was made from thenceforth to serve as a vestry or chapter house.

After a struggle, not without bloodshed, among the remaining sons of Donald,—the aid of the English being called in by one of the contending factions,—Carbrach, the youngest brother, was raised to the sovereignty, though clearly with but nominal power, as it appears that the capital of his kingdom, Limerick, was in the year 1195 under the rule of English authorities.

In the mean time, the quick change of deputies, in the administration of the colony, showed how uneasy and difficult was the task. After a short, but apparently unsuccessful experiment of office, Hugh de Lacy was succeeded by William Petit, for whom, shortly after, we find substituted William Marshall, or Mareschall, second earl of Pembroke. This powerful nobleman, who, in right of his new dignity, bore the golden staff§ and cross at the coronation of Richard I., had, together with his earldom, received from that monarch the hand of Isabel, daughter and heir of the late earl, and became thus invested with her princely Irish possessions. But, whatever advantage this connexion with the country may have given him, the results of his government were by no means prosperous. Presuming on the tameness with which the Irish had yielded to aggression, their haughty invaders now began to add insult to wrong: but not with equal impunity. Far more alive to contempt than to injury, those who had witnessed unmoved the destruction of their ancient monarchy, now flew to arms with instant alacrity, under the sure goad of English insolence and scorn; and the two most active and popular of the native princes, Cathal of Connaught and Mac Carthy of Desmond, held forth their ever ready banner to all whose war cry was vengeance against the English. So great was the success, accordingly, of the national cause, during the short government of the earl Marshall, that, in spite of the perfidy which, as usual, found its way into the Irish councils, Mac Carthy, aided by the forces of Cathal and those of O'Lochlin, succeeded in re-

* Lanigan, chap. xxxi. § 10.

† Ferrar's history of Limerick, at *St. Mary's Church.*

‡ The Cistercian Abbey of Holy Cross. "A famous abbey, heretofore," says Camden, "which makes the country about it to be commonly called the country of the Holy Cross of Tipperary. This church enjoys certain privileges granted in honour of a piece of Christ's Cross preserved there." See Lanigan, ch. xxx. § 2, also Dr. Milner's *Inquiry*, &c. Letter 14; and Mr. Crofton Croker's *Researches in the South of Ireland.* chap. xiv

§ According to Prynne, this ceremony was not introduced till a later period:—"This is to be observed," he says, "that, though there were divers lords marshals of England before the reign of Richard II., yet Richard II., created Tho. Mowbray, first earl marshal of England, per nomen Comitis Mareschalli Angliæ. He and his successor earl marshal being enabled by this charter to carry a golden staff before the king, and in all other places, with the king's arms at the top of it, and his own at the lower end, when all the marshals before his creation carried only a wooden staff."—*On the Institutes*, Chap. 1.

ducing several of the garrisons in Munster, and, after a siege of some duration, compelled Cork itself to surrender to his arms.

Discouraged and mortified by these reverses, the earl Marshall willingly resigned the reins of authority to Hamo de Valois, who finding, on his arrival, the government embarrassed, for want of means, made no scruple of commencing his career by a forcible invasion of the property of the Church. Notwithstanding the angry remonstrances of Cuming, archbishop of Dublin, Hamo persisted in his design,—seizing several lands belonging to the see of Dublin, and taking possession also of the temporalities of the church of Leighlin, together with the property of the canons. The indignant archbishop, after having, in vain, tried entreaty, remonstrance, and excommunication, in utter despair, at length, of redress from the Irish authorities, laid the sentence of interdict on his diocess, and departed for England to invoke the interference of the throne. But neither earl John nor king Richard appear to have afforded him any remedy. Among the letters of Pope Innocent III. written at this time, and containing some curious particulars respecting the Irish Church,* there is one addressed to earl John, complaining angrily of the outrageous conduct of his deputy, and desiring him to compel that officer to restore to the church and canons of Leighlin the temporalities of which he had despoiled them. In the mean while Hamo, who had enriched himself amply by these exactions, was recalled from the government of the country, and Meyler Fitz Henry, one of the earliest of the adventurers in the Irish wars, was appointed his successor in the office. A. D. 1197.

In the following year died, at the advanced age of 82, Roderic O'Connor, the last of the monarchs of Ireland, who during ten years of his life reigned over Connaught alone, for the eighteen following wielded the sceptre of all Ireland, and finally devoted the thirteen remaining years of his existence to monastic seclusion and repentance. A mistaken zeal for the national honour has induced some writers on Irish history to endeavour to invest the life and character of this unfortunate prince with some semblance of heroic dignity and interest. In their morbid sympathy with his own personal ruin and fall, they seemed to forget that, by his recreant spirit, he brought down a kingdom along with him, and entailed subjection and its bitter consequences upon his country through all time. But it is in truth idle to waste words on the personal character of such a man; the only feeling his name awakens being that of pity for the doomed country, which, at such a crisis of its fortunes, when honour, safety, independence, national existence, were all at stake, was cursed for the crowning of its evil destiny, with a ruler and leader so utterly unworthy of his high calling. A. D. 1198.

How much the fate of an entire nation may depend on the domestic relations of its ruling family, is strikingly exemplified in the instances both of Roderic and of Henry, whose struggles and contentions with their own children gave a direction to their public measures, of which the subsequent history of both countries has deeply felt the influence. Had not Henry been called away, by a dark conspiracy within his own family, from applying his powerful mind to the conquest and settlement of Ireland, far different might have been the destiny of that ill-starred land. Had the house of Roderic, on the other hand, united in defence of their rights, and thus set an example of zealous co-operation to others, a more healthful confidence in themselves and their rulers might have been awakened in the people of Ireland, a brave resistance would have won from the conqueror respect and forbearance towards the vanquished, and, at least, the disgrace of unnatural treachery would not have been added to that of insignificance and weakness.

One of the few circumstances of Roderic's life that deserve to be mentioned with any honour, was the effort made by him to recall to life the now almost extinct learning of the country, by his patronage of the schools of Armagh, and by the annual endowment, first established under his auspices, for the head-master of that institution. It is worthy of remark, too, as affording an instance of those strange contrasts which Irish society, as we have seen, so frequently presents, that this annual pension for the encouragement of a school, to which the lovers of learning resorted from all parts of Europe, was, according to the custom of rude, uncivilized times, paid in oxen.

* One of these letters refers to an attempt made by an ecclesiastic named Daniel, to impose upon the Pope by means of forged letters, professing to have been written by certain Irish bishops, recommending Daniel as a person qualified to fill the vacant see of Ross. Dr. Lanigan, in referring to this letter of Pope Innocent, mentions that one of the candidates for the bishopric is designated therein by the initial letter of his name. But it will be seen, from the following extract, that all the candidates are so designated:—"Propter quod idem predecessor noster causam eorum vobis fratres Casselen et Laomen (*al.* Laarensis) Episcopi sub ea forma commisit, ut de forma et processu electionis memorati D. solicitè quæreretis, et si eum electum canonicè fuisse constaret, ipsum faceretis pacifica possessione gaudere; alioquin inter prædictos F. et. E. audiretis causam et cujus electionem canonicam et magis rationaliter factam inveniretis, &c. &c."—*Letters of Pope Innocent III.*, published by Baluzius, tom. I. l. 1. ep. 364.

Thrown back as the country had been by the harassing events of the century just now closed, into a state of confusion and disorganization, differing but little, in its general aspect, from barbarism, it could not be expected that her native literature would escape the prevailing eclipse, or leave any names behind which even the antiquary would consider worthy of preservation. There is still extant, however, a Metrical Catalogue of the kings of Ireland, composed, in this age, by a learned antiquary named Giolla Moduda, abbot of Ardbracken, in Meath. This chronological poem, which is frequently referred to, as of high authority, by Irish scholars, was written during the reign of the great Turlogh O'Connor; and it is a proof alike of the courage and the professional trustworthiness of the antiquary, that he ventured to deny to that powerful monarch, then in the full flow of success, any place in the series of Ireland's legitimate kings.

To Celcus, or Cellach, the eminent archbishop of Armagh, who died A. D. 1129, Bale has attributed a Book of Constitutions and other writings; but apparently on no better grounds than he has for bestowing upon him a wife and children, and sending him to be educated at Oxford. With as little foundation, probably, has a Life of St. Malachy been attributed to Congan, one of those Irish correspondents of St. Bernard, whose entreaties, as he tells us, induced him to undertake a Life of St. Malachy himself.*

For whatever insight we may have gained, previously to the epoch of the English invasion, into the social condition and habits of the Irish, we are indebted solely to the testimony of the Irish themselves; for it is a singular fact that, so long had this people remained secluded from all the rest of the world, that the account given of them by the Welsh ecclesiastic Giraldus, who went thither, as we have seen, in the train of prince John, was the first and only one known to have been writen by a foreign visiter of that country, from the days of Himilco and the Greek geographers down to the time of Henry II. With the aid, therefore, of this light, but following cautiously its guidance, I shall proceed to offer some brief remarks respecting the social and moral condition of the Irish people, at the gloomy period we have now reached; and if not to throw around it any very favourable colouring, at least to show that it has been represented too darkly by others.

To those pre-occupied by the picture drawn in the pages of Giraldus of the low state of civilization among the Irish at this time, it would be difficult, I fear, to suggest any consideration that would weaken the hold his authority has taken of their minds. There are indeed few enormities, whether in morals or manners, that are not attributed by him to the natives. In estimating the value, however, of his testimony, the character of the man himself ought to be taken into account; and, finding him so ready a believer and reporter of all sorts of physical marvels and monsters, we should consider whether a taste for the morally monstrous may not also have inspired his pen, and induced him, in a similar manner, to impose as well upon himself, perhaps, as his readers. He who gravely tells of a certain race of people in Ossory,† who were, every seven years, transformed into wolves, would hardly hesitate at the easier effort of giving them also wolfish habits and dispositions.

There is yet another feature of his character as a censor, which must be attended to in appreciating the value of his censure, and that is, this proportion always found to exist between his general charge and the facts which he cites to support it. The Irish people he pronounces to be faithless, cruel, inhospitable, and barbarous; and as long as he deals thus only in generalities, the imagination is left at large to divine the extent to which all these vices may have been carried. But whenever, as in the following instance, he subjoins proofs of the alleged charge, the mind is relieved by knowing definitely the amount of the transgression. "This people," he says, "are a most filthy race; a race of all others the most uninformed in the very rudiments of faith,—they do not as yet pay tithes or first-offerings."‡ He then adds the charge before noticed, respecting what he calls their "incestuous" marriages, meaning thereby marriages within that degree of consanguinity which the canons of the church had proscribed.

Another consideration which I have more than once endeavoured to press upon the reader's mind is, that at all periods of Ireland's course with which we are acquainted, so wide has been the interval, in civilization and social comforts, between her highest and

* In St. Bernard's Preface to this work, which is addressed to Congan, he says, "Tu id mihi Abba Congane, injungis . . . . . ac tecum pariter (ut ex Hybernia scribis) vestra illa omnis ecclesia sanctorum, libens obedio.

† He makes one of these Ossorian wolves tell his own story;—"De quodam hominum genere sumus Ossyriensium, unde quolibet septennio per imprecationem sancti cujusdam Natalis scilicet Abbatis . . . . formam enim humanam prorsus exuentes, induunt lupinam."

‡ "Gens enim hæc, gens spurcissima, gens vitiis involutissima, gens omnium gentium in fidei rudimentis incultissima:—Nondum enim decimas vel primitias solvunt."—*Topog. Dist.* 3. c. 19.

lowest classes, that no conclusion founded solely on acquaintance with one part of her population can furnish any analogies by which to judge of the real condition of the other. Giraldus himself appears to have been aware of this peculiarity in the structure of Irish society, or at least to have been puzzled by the contrasts resulting from it; and hence his summary of the character of the people is, that "where they are good you will find none better,—where they are bad, none worse."*

In his account of the clergy of the country, there are but few dark shades interspersed. He speaks of them as commendable for their attention to all religious duties, and possessing, among various other virtues which he allows to them, the "prerogative of chastity" in an eminent degree.† He lauds also their exceeding abstinence and sparingness of food; though in wine, he says, they were accustomed, after the fast and toils of the day, to indulge more freely than was becoming.‡ He repeats, however, his commendation of the blameless purity of their lives, which, notwithstanding this indulgence, they most strictly, he admits, preserved.§ Altogether, his tribute to the character of the Irish clergy (though of the bishops he complains as slothful and inattentive to their duty) is such as, at any period, it would be honourable to a clerical body to receive.

One of his charges against the Irish prelates was, that, from the time of St. Patrick's mission, not a single Irish bishop had suffered martyrdom for the faith; and, on his advancing, one day, this opinion, in the presence of Maurice, archbishop of Cashel, whom he describes as a learned and discreet man, that prelate thus significantly replied to him: —"It is true our nation may seem to be barbarous, uncultivated, and cruel; yet have they always shown reverence and honour to men of the church, nor ever would raise their hands in violence against the saints of God. But there is now come among us a people, who not only know how, but have been accustomed to make martyrs. From henceforth, therefore, Ireland will, like other nations, have her martyrs."‖

In his account of the state of manufactures and the useful arts among the Irish, Giraldus falls into no less inconsistencies than on the subject of their morals and manners. For while, on the one hand, he tells us that they had no sort of merchandize, nor practised any mechanical art whatsoever, he informs us, on the other, of articles common among them, such as cloth dresses, fringes, linen shirts, military weapons well steeled, musical instruments, and other works of art, all implying a certain advancement in different trades and handicrafts.¶ He mentions a book, also which he had seen at Kildare, containing a Concordance of the Four Gospels, according to the correction of St. Jerome; and which is described by him as so beautifully painted and embellished with innumerable emblems and miniatures, that you might be sure, he adds, it was the workmanship not of human, but of angelic hands.**

* "Est enim gens hæc cunctis fere in actibus immoderata et in omnes affectus vehementissima. Unde et sic mali, deterrimi sunt et nusquam pejores: ita et bonis meliores non reperies." The learned Petavius (Petau) attributes, almost in the same words, the same character to the ancient Athenians.—*Orat.* 8.

† Inter varias quibus pollet virtutes, castitatis prærogativa præeminet atque præcellet." c. 27.

‡ "Inter tot millia vix unum invenies, qui post jugem tam jejuniorum quam orationum instantiam, vino variisque potionibus diurnos labores enormius quam deceret, noctu non redimat."—*Ibid.*

§ Unde et hoc pro miraculo duci potest, quod ubi vina dominantur, Venus non regnat."

‖ "Verum est, inquit; quia licet gens nostra Barbara, nimis inculta et crudelis esse videtur, veris tamen Ecclesiasticis honorem magnum, et reverentiam semper exhibere solebant, et in sanctos Dei nulla occasione manum extendere. Sed nunc in regnum gens advenit quæ martyres et facere novit et consuevit. A modo Hibernia, sicut aliæ regiones, martyres habebit."—*Dist.* iii. c. 32.

¶ "Item non lino vel lanificio, non aliquo mercimoniorum genere, nec ulla mechanicarum artium specie vitam producunt."—*Dist.* iii. c. 10. See Gratianus Lucius, c. 12, where he clearly proves, from Giraldus's own showing, that the Irish must have had "carminatores, tinctores, metrices, textores, fullones, panni tonsores, et sartores."

** "Ut vere hæc omnia angelica potius quam humana intelligentia jam asseveraveris esse composita."—*Dist.* ii. c. 38.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

JOHN.

Condition of Ireland during the reign of king John.—The dissensions among the natives fomented by the great English Lords.—Contention between Cathal and Carrach for the principality of Connaught.—Each abetted by English auxiliaries.—Two thirds of that province surrendered by Cathal to king John.—Rivalry between John de Courcy and Hugh de Lacy.—De Courcy sent prisoner to England.—The earldom of Ulster transferred, on his death, to De Lacy.—Murder of De Courcy's natural son by one of the De Lacys.—Expedition of king John to Ireland.—Submission of many of the Irish chiefs.—Effect of his presence upon the English barons.—Panic and flight of William de Braosa and the two De Lacys.—Outrage committed by the septs of Wicklow.—Introduction by John of English laws and usages into Ireland.—His return to England.—Administration of De Grey.—Peace in Ireland.

The reign of king John, which, in the hands of the English historian, presents so proud and stirring an example of successful resistance to wrong, exhibits in our Irish records, but a melancholy picture of slavery and suffering. Some brief struggles were, indeed, attempted, in the course of this reign, by the natives; but, while fondly persuading themselves that, in these efforts, they fought in their own cause, they were, really, but instruments in the hands of some rival English lords, who, by exciting and assisting the native chieftains against each other, divided and weakened the national strength, and thereby advanced their own violent and rapacious views.

A. D. 1198. Thus, when, on the death of the monarch Roderic, his two sons broke out into fierce contention for the right of succession, William de Burgh, a baron of the family of Fitz-Adelm, espoused the cause of the brother named Carrach, while John de Courcy and Walter de Lacy were seen to range themselves on the side of Cathal of the Bloody Hand;* and a signal victory gained over the latter and his English auxiliaries, at Kilmacdaugh, appeared, for a time, to have finally decided the contest. As the alliance, however, of William de Burgh had been chiefly the means of ensuring Carrach's success, there was yet a chance that this powerful lord might be brought to

A. D. 1200. desert the chief's cause, and that thus the fortunes of the discomfited Cathal might again be retrieved. Speculating, justly, as it appears, on the selfish views of De Burgh, this prince held forth to him such prospects of gain and advantage, as succeeded in winning him over from the banner of his rival.† With the aid of so disreputable an alliance, Cathal again took the field against his brother, and, after a sanguinary action, in the course of which Carrach was slain, regained his principality.‡

Down to this period, the province of Connaught, the hereditary kingdom of the last Irish monarch, had, however, torn by civil dissension, continued to preserve its territorial integrity, as guaranteed by the solemn treaty between Henry and king Roderic. But at the crisis we have now reached, this inviolability of the realm of the O'Connors was set aside, and through the act of its own reigning prince. Whether from weariness of the constant dissensions he had been involved in, or, perhaps, hoping that by the cession of a part of his territories he might secure a more valid title to the remainder, Cathal, of his own free will, agreed to surrender§ to king John two parts of Connaught, and to hold the third from him in vassalage, paying annually for it the sum of 100 marks. The letter of

A. D. 1205. king John,‖ wherein the terms of this compact are stated and agreed to, is addressed to Meyler Fitz-Henry, who, was, at this time, justiciary or lord justice of Ireland and whose name is associated with the earliest adventures of the Anglo-Normans in this island.

* See chap. xxxii. of this Work, pp. 299. 300.

† Ware's Annals, ad. an. 1200.

‡ Annal. Inisfall. The Book of Clonmacnoise, at the years 1201-2, commemorates a number of achievements performed by Cathal, in conjunction with William de Burgh.

§ Close Roll, 6 John.

‖ This letter is given by Leland at full length, p. 175.

The mischief of the policy pursued by Henry II., in deputing to an upstart and suddenly enriched aristocracy (the most odious, perhaps, of all forms of political power) the administration of Irish possessions, was in a few instances more strikingly exemplified than in the rivalry, which now had reached its most disturbing height, between John de Courcy and the rich and powerful baron, Hugh de Lacy, son of the first lord of Meath. Following the example of De Courcy himself, this baron had assumed for some time, a state of princely independence, entering into treaties with his brother lords and the native chiefs, and aiding the latter in their local and provincial feuds.

On the accession, however, of John to the English throne, the daring openness with which De Courcy spoke of that event, as well as of the dark and guilty deed by which it was followed, drew down upon him the king's heaviest wrath; and to his rival, Hugh de Lacy, now made lord justice, was committed the not unwelcome task of seizing the rebellious baron, and sending him prisoner to England. What was ultimately the fate of this hardy warrior we have no trust-worthy means of ascertaining.* The stories told† of his subsequent adventures in England, his acceptance of the challenge of the champion of France, and his display of prowess in the presence of the two kings, are all not only fabulous in themselves, but wholly at variance with known historical events. That he did not succeed, as some have alleged, in regaining his place in the royal favour, may be taken for granted from the fact that, though he left a son to inherit his possessions, both the title and property of the earldom of Ulster were, on his decease, transferred to his rival, Hugh de Lacy.‡ Nor did the hatred he had awakened in this family die with himself, but extended also to his race; as we find that, not many years after, a natural son of his, who bore the title of lord of Ratheny and Kilbarrock, was assassinated in cold blood, by one of the De Lacys.§ A. D. 1205.

In the year 1210, king John, with the view, chiefly, as it would seem, of diverting the minds of his people from the depressing effects of the papal interdict which now hung like a benumbing spell over his kingdom, undertook a military expedition against Scotland; and, having succeeded in that quarter, led, soon after, a numerous army into Ireland.‖ Between the exactions and cruelties of the English on one side, and the constant revolts and fierce reprisals of the maddened natives on the other, a sufficient case for armed intervention was doubtless then, as it has been at almost all periods since, but too easily found. The very display, however, of so large a force was, of itself, sufficient to produce a temporary calm. No less than twenty, we are told, of the Irish princes, or chiefs, came to pay homage to the monarch, among whom were O'Neill of Tyrone, and the warlike Cathal, prince of Connaught; the latter offering, for the first time, his homage as a vassal of the English crown.¶ After remaining but two days in Dublin,** the king proceeded to Carrickfurgus, the ancient castle of which town he took possession of, and fixed his abode there for ten days.†† A. D. 1210.

While thus auspicious appears to have been the effect of the presence of royalty upon the natives, it produced, in a different way, no less salutary consequences, by the check it gave to the career of some of those rapacious barons, compared to whose multiform misrule the tyranny of one would have been hailed as a blessing. Among these, one of the most impracticable had been William de Breuse, or Braosa, to whom the king soon after his accession, had made a grant of estates in the south of Ireland. Struck with panic at the consciousness of his own misdeeds, this lord took flight precipitately from the kingdom, leaving his wife and daughter at the mercy of the monarch, who, when at Carrickfurgus,‡‡ had them both taken into custody, and brought them over with him, on his return into England. At Bristol, he yielded so far to the lady's entreaties, as to allow an interview

* According to the Annals of Inisfallen, he was slain by the De Lacys, Hanmar, whom Lodge follows, makes him die in France.

† By Holinshed, Campion, and others.

‡ Pat. Roll. 6 John.

§ Annal. Hibern. apud Camden.

‖ To defray the expenses of this expedition, he had seized and plundered the wretched Jews, all over England; and the memorable torture inflicted upon a Jew at Bristol, by striking out, every day, one of his cheek-teeth, was for the purpose of forcing him to pay down 10,000 marks towards the cost of the Irish expedition. The religious house of Margam, in Wales, was specially exempted from the general exaction levied on this occasion, in consequence of the hospitality extended by its inmates to Henry and his army, both on their way to Ireland, and on their return.—*Annal. de Margam.*

¶ Walsingham represents Cathal as having been, at this time, conquered and reduced by John. "In suam ditionem redegat totam terram Cutalp regis Connaciæ triumphato."—*Ypodig. Neustria.* But the Annals of Inisfallen, with more correctness, state it to have been an act of willing homage. "Cathal Crob Dearg, king of Connaught, came with a great retinue to pay his court to king John." See, for John taking Cathal under his protection, Rymer, tom. i. p. 126.

** Itinerary of king John.

†† Ibid.

‡‡ Rex Johannes transfretavit in Hiberniam et cepit ibi castrum Krakesfergus.—*Chronic. Thome. Wikes.* See also *Itinerary.*

between her and her husband;* but she is said to have been afterwards, by his order, imprisoned in Windsor Castle, and, together with her son, inhumanly starved to death.

The two De Lacys, alarmed at the arrival of the king in Ireland, took flight into France, and there found employment, as garden labourers, in the abbey of St. Taurin. In this retreat they had remained concealed for two or three years, when the abbot, induced, by some circumstances, to suspect their real rank, drew forth from themselves the particulars of their story; and then by appealing, in their behalf, to the clemency of John, succeeded in prevailing upon him to receive them again into favour. On condition of Walter paying 2500 marks for Meath, and Hugh, on his part, paying 4000 marks for the earldom of Ulster, the two brothers were both reinstated in their possessions.† In grateful acknowledgment of the service rendered him by the abbot of St. Taurin, Walter de Lacy, in returning to Ireland, brought with him the abbot's nephew, and, after making him a knight, bestowed upon him the seignory of Dingle.‡

By a writ to his barons and justices, in the ninth year of his reign, John had ordered that measures should be taken for the expulsion from the king's lands of all robbers and plunderers, and all such persons as harboured them;§ and an instance of outrage, said to have occurred about the same time, will show how daring was the spirit of lawlessness then abroad, even in the neighbourhood of the chief seat of English power.

A. D. 1209. The population of the city of Dublin, at this time, appears to have consisted, for the most part, of colonists from Bristol, who, induced by the grant which Henry II. had so unceremoniously made of Dublin to the Bristolians, established themselves there in great numbers. These citizens having, on the Monday of Easter week, flocked out from the town, for air and recreation, towards a place still called Cullen's Wood, were there attacked by some lawless septs, inhabiting the mountains in the neighbourhood of Wicklow, and no less than 300 of the assemblage, exclusive of women and children, inhumanly butchered.‖ In commemoration of this massacre, it continued long after to be the custom of the citizens of Dublin to hold a feast every year, on Easter Monday, upon the spot where the memorable outrage had been committed. There, pitching their numerous tents, the citizens passed the day in sports and recreation; and, among other modes of celebrating the occasion, used to challenge, from time to time, the "mountain enemy" to come forth and attack them, if he dared.¶

To introduce into the new territories of which they possessed themselves the laws and usages of the country they had left, would be naturally a favourite object of the first settlers in Ireland; and in this civilizing process Henry II., though so limited in time for his task, made very considerable progress. Thus, for instance, the duties, conditions, and services by which, under the feudal system, property was held in England, continued to be the grounds of tenure in all the grants made by him in locating his new colony. The establishment, also, of courts baron, by the respective lords to whom he had granted lands, implies, manifestly, the adoption among them of the common law of England; and it appears, from a record of the reign of Edward III., that Hugh de Lacy, from the time of the grant to him of the territory of Meath by Henry II., held and enjoyed all jurisdictions and cognizance of all pleas within that district.** In the incorporation charter which John, as lord of Ireland, granted to the city of Dublin, in the year 1192, we find the principle of burgage tenure established,—the messuages, plantations, and buildings, within the metes of the city, having been granted to the burgesses, "to be held by them in free burgage, and by the service of landgable which they render within the walls."††

When John, for the second time, now landed upon the Irish shore, not finding any enemy to encounter his mighty force, he was left the more leisure to attend to the civil condition of the realm; and not only did he give to the laws and institutions which he found there already established a more extended scope and exercise, but he had, also, the merit of introducing others of no less import to the future well being of the settlement.‡‡

* Letter of king John. See *Description of the Patent Rolls*, &c., by Thomas D. Hardy, F. S. A. Our histories in general represent De Braosa as being at this time in France.

† Pat. Roll. 17 John.

‡ Annal Hibern. apud Camden.

§ Pat. Roll, 9 John.

‖ Hanmer.

¶ In process of time the singing boys of the cathedral were deputed to offer this defiance (Stuart, *Hist. Memoirs of Armagh*, ch. viii.;) and the choirs, says Leland, are annually regaled at this place, called the Wood of Cullen, to the present day.

** Chancery Roll, Dublin, cited by Lynch, *View of Legal Institutions*, p. 6.

†† Gale, *Inquiry into the Ancient Corporate System of Ireland, Appendix*, iv. "Nor should it be concealed that, from the beginning of his reign, this inconsistent prince (John) had shown a singular readiness to convert demesne towns into corporate boroughs;—a measure inimical to all despotism."—*Roger Wendover*.

‡‡ Mathew Paris,—Henry de Knyghton,—Walter de Hemingford, &c. "Statuitque ibidem (says Henry de Knyghton) legem Anglicanam, et ut omnia eorum judicia, secundum eandem, vel Anglicanam consuetudinem, terminarentur."

Some writers, it is true, have asserted that on this monarch's accession to the throne, he found the laws of England already in full operation throughout his Irish dominions. But there seems little doubt that to him is to be attributed, besides other useful measures, the division of such parts of the kingdom as were in his possession into shires, or counties,* with their respective sheriffs and other officers, after the manner of England; and that the first sterling money circulated in Ireland was coined under his direction.†

We need look, indeed, for no stronger evidence of the important share which this prince, in other respects so odious, took in the great task of transplanting his country's laws and institutions into Ireland, than is found in a record of the reign of his successor, Henry III., wherein it is set forth‡ that "John brought with him into Ireland discreet men, skilled in the laws, by whose advice he commanded the laws of England to be observed in Ireland, and left the said laws reduced in writing, under his seal, in the Exchequer of Dublin." Having provided thus for the better administration of that kingdom's affairs, and in so far redeemed the disgrace of his former experiment, the king set sail for England, leaving to John de Grey, bishop of Norwich, whom he had appointed lord justice, the task of carrying all these measures into effect; and such was the tranquillizing influence, both of his policy and of the skill and vigour with which he administered it, that, when the French king, shortly after, threatened an invasion of England, the lord justice was enabled to spare from the force under his command a company of knights and 300 infantry, to aid the cause of his royal master.§

Throughout the remainder of this monarch's reign, which passed in a series of struggles, as dishonouring as they were disastrous, first with the pope, and then with his own turbulent barons, there appears to have been no effort made by his subjects in Ireland, whether English or native, to turn the embarrassments of his position to account for the advancement of their own several interests and views. On the contrary, in defiance of all ordinary speculation,—and a similar anomaly presents itself at more than one crisis of our history,—while England was affording an example of rebellion and riot, which mere neighbourhood, it might be supposed, would have rendered infectious, the sister country mean while looked quietly on, and remained in unbroken peace. There are extant, indeed, letters of John, written at the time when the English barons were in arms against his authority, returning thanks to the barons of Ireland for their fidelity and service to him, and asking their advice respecting some arduous affairs in which he was then engaged.‖ It appears, also, from an order addressed at this time to the archbishop of Dublin, that seasonable presents to the native princes and chiefs were among the means adopted for keeping them in good humour; that prelate having been commissioned to purchase, forthwith, a sufficient quantity of scarlet cloth, to be made into robes for the Irish kings, and others of the native grandees.¶

As in the contentions between John and his barons the people of Ireland had taken no part, so neither in the Charter of Liberties wrung from him by those turbulent nobles did his Irish subjects enjoy any immediate communion or share. There were notwithstanding, present, on the side of the king, at Runnymede, two eminent personages, Henri de Londres,** and William, earl marshal,†† who might both, from their respective stations, be naturally looked to as representatives of Irish interests; De Londres being archbishop of Dublin, and at this time justiciary of Ireland, while the lord marshal was a baron of immense hereditary possessions in that country. By neither, however, of these great lords, does any claim appear to have been advanced in behalf A. D. 1215.

* Of the counties of Ireland, says Ware, "twelve were erected in Leinster and Munster, by king John: viz. Dublin, Kildare, Meath, Uriel (or Louth,) Catherlough (or Carlow,) Kilkenny, Wexford, Waterford, Cork, Limerick, Kerry, and Tipperary."

† Some of the coins of John were struck before his accession to the throne. Those which he caused to be struck at this time (1210) consisted of pennies, half-pence, and farthings, of the same standard as the English which gives twenty-two and a half grains to the penny.—Lindsay's *View of the Coinage of Ireland.*

‡ See this writ in Cox, p. 51. § Cox.

‖ Several of such writs from the crown, during this reign, asking "consilium et auxilium" of the nobles of Ireland, may be found among the records in the Tower.

¶ Rymer tom. i.—Presents of cloth were sometimes made to the chiefs in acknowledgment of their authority; and so late as the middle of the fifteenth century, we find John May, on being appointed archbishop of Armagh presenting to O'Neil of Ulster, six yards of good cloth for his (O'Neil's) investiture, and three yards of like cloth for his wife's tunic.—(*Regist. Armach.*

** It is told of this prelate, that, having called together his tenants, for the purpose of learning, as he alleged, by what title they held their lands, he thus got possession of all their leases, and other evidences of their property, and then consigned the whole to the flames; for which act, it is added, he was nicknamed "Scorch villain," or "Burn-bill" (as Holinshed explains it,) by the natives.—See this idle story, with all its redundant particulars, in Hanmer's Chronicle.

†† The founder of Tintern abbey, in the county of Wexford. This lord, being in great danger at sea, made a vow to found an abbey on whatever spot he should reach in safety. His bark found shelter in Bannow bay, and he religiously performed his vow, filling the abbey which he there founded with Cistercian monks, brought from Tintern, in Monmouthshire.—Archdall, *Monast. Hibern.*

of the king's Irish subjects, nor any effort made to include them specifically in the grants and privileges accorded by the charter.

The same respite, however, from civil strife, continued through the remainder of John's inglorious reign; and the chief merit of this unusual calm may doubtless be attributed to the talent and judgment of Henri de Londres and Geoffrey de Marisco, to whom, successively, and, for a time, jointly, during this interval, was entrusted the task of administering the affairs of the realm.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

HENRY III.

Accession of Henry III.—Grant of the great charter to his English subjects in Ireland.—Exclusion of the natives from all share of English laws and liberties.—Individual exceptions.—Hostilities between Hugh de Lacy and the Earl of Pembroke.—Surrender of their principalities by the Irish chiefs—agree to hold them in future as tenants of the crown.—Breach of faith on the part of the King towards Cathal.—Visit of Feidlim, Prince of Connaught, to the English King.—Rebellion and death of Richard, Earl Marshall.—Irish forces employed by the King in his warfare against Wales.—Admission of a few natives to the participation of English law.—Threatened invasion of the King's dominions in Gascony, and pressing requests for aid from Ireland.—Grant by Henry of the Lordship of Ireland to his son, Prince Edward.—Important reservations in that grant.—Probability that Prince Edward visited Ireland.—Renewal of hostilities with Wales.—General rising of the Mac Carthys of Desmond.—A number of Geraldine Lords and Knights put to death by them.—Fall out among themselves and are crushed.—Dissensions also between the De Burghs and the Geraldines.—A parliament, or council, held at Kilkenny, and peace restored between these two families.—Administration of Sir Robert de Ufford.

THE new monarch being but ten years old when he ascended the throne, it became necessary to appoint a guardian both of the king and of the realm; and the earl
A. D. 1216. of Pembroke, who, as marshal of England, was already at the head of the armies, and who, though faithful to the fortunes of John, had yet retained the respect of the people, was, by a general council of his brother barons, appointed protector of the realm. To this nobleman, in addition to his immense possessions in England and Wales, had devolved, by his marriage with Isabella, daughter and heiress of earl Strongbow, the lordship, or rather royal palatinate, of Leinster. Having, personally, therefore, so deep an interest in the prosperity of the English settlement, it could little be doubted that affairs connected with that country's welfare would under his government, become objects of special attention.

Accordingly one of the first measures of the new reign was to transmit to Ireland a duplicate of the instrument by which, in a grand council held at Bristol, Henry had renewed and ratified the great Charter of Liberty granted by his father. Neither had the English settlers themselves been so little alive to the favourable prospect, which a reign, opening under the auspices of the lord of Leinster, presented, as not to avail themselves of the first opportunity of making an appeal to the consideration of the throne. Shortly after the king's accession, they had laid before him, through the medium of one of his chaplains, Ralph of Norwich, a statement of the grievances under which they laboured; and it was in about seven weeks after that the duplicate of the renowned English charter was transmitted to them,* "sealed," says the letter of Henry, which accompanied it, "with the seals of our lord Gualo, legate of the apostolical see, and of our trusty earl, William Marshall, our governor, and the governor of our kingdom,—because as yet we possess no seal."†

There prevailed a notion, it is evident, through the few first reigns of the Anglo-Irish period, that the kingdom of Ireland ought to have for its rulers some member of the reign-

* Pat. Roll, 1 Henry III.
† Quasi sigillum nondum habuimus.

ing family of England. An unsuccessful trial of this experiment took place, as we have seen, under Henry Plantagenet; and the reign at present occupying our attention exhibits an equally injudicious partition of the royal title and power; the first suggestion of such a plan having originated with the Irish barons themselves, who, in the memorial addressed by them to Henry, on his accession,* desired, among other requests, that either the queen dowager or the king's brother should be sent to reside in that country.

In giving an account of the transmission to Ireland, by Henry III., of a copy or duplicate of the great charter, historians have left it too much to be implied that the charters for both countries were exactly the same; without any, even, of those adaptations and compliances which the variance in customs between the two countries would reasonably require. The language of Henry himself, in transmitting the document, somewhat favours this view of the transaction. But such was not likely to have been the mode in which an instrument, then deemed so important, was framed. Among the persons by whose advice it had been granted were William Marshall, lord of Leinster, Walter de Lacy, lord of Meath, John, lord marshal of Ireland,† and several other noblemen, all connected, as lords of the soil and public functionaries, with Ireland, and intimately acquainted with the peculiar laws and customs of the land. As might naturally be expected, therefore, several minute but not unimportant differences are found to exist between the two charters: some in the forms, for instance, of administering justice; others in the proceedings for the advowsons of churches; and some arising out of the peculiar Irish custom as to dowers; while all imply, in those who drew up the document, a desire to accommodate the laws of the new settlers to the customs and usages of the country in which they were located.‡ A. D 1216.

It appears strange, however, that any such deference for the native customs and institutions should be shown by legislators, who yet left the natives themselves almost wholly out of their consideration; the monstrous fact being, that the actual people of Ireland were wholly excluded from any share in the laws and measures by which their own country was to be thus disposed of and governed. Individual exceptions, indeed, to this general exclusion of the natives occur so early as the time of king John,§ during whose reign there appear "charters" of English laws and liberties, to such of the natives as thought it necessary to obtain them; and it is but just to say of John, as well as of his immediate successors, Henry and Edward, that they endeavoured, each of them, to establish a community of laws among all the inhabitants of the country. But the foreign lords of the land were opposed invariably to this wise and just policy; and succeeded in substituting for it a monstrous system of outlawry and proscription, the disturbing effects of which were continued down from age to age, nor have ceased to be felt and execrated even to the present day.

The desire of plunder, which had hitherto united the English settlers against the natives, was now, by a natural process, dividing the enriched English among themselves. The first very violent interruption of the peace that occurred in Henry's reign arose out of the rival pretensions of two powerful barons, Hugh de Lacy and the young William, earl of Pembroke, the latter of whom, on the death of his father, in 1219, had succeeded to his vast Irish possessions. Some part of the lands which thus descended to him having been claimed, as rightfully his own, by De Lacy, the arbitrement of the sword was appealed to, in preference to that of the law, and fierce hostilities between them ensued; in the course of which Trim‖ was besieged by Pembroke, and gallantly defended, and the counties of Leinster and Meath were alternately laid waste. The powerful chief of Tyrone, O'Neill, lent his aid, in this war of plunder to De Lacy.¶ A. D. 1220.

How little of fairness or good faith the wretched natives had to expect in their dealings with the foreigner, was, about this time, made but two warningly manifest. Regarding the throne as their only refuge against the swarm of petty tyrants by whom they were harassed, more than one of the great Irish captains now followed the example of Cathal of Connaught, in formally surrendering to the king their ancient principalities, and then receiving back a portion by royal grant, to be held in future by them as tenants of the English crown;—thus making a sacrifice of part of their hereditary rights, in order to

* Close Roll. 1 Henry III.

† Nephew of the lord William Marshall, and appointed by king John to the marshalsea of all Ireland, in the ninth year of his reign.

‡ Lynch. *View of the Legal Institutions, &c. established in Ireland*, chap. 2.

§ So early as the year 1216, John had laid a precedent for this sort of charters, by his grant of "English law and liberty" to Donald O'Neill.—Pat. Roll, 17 John.

‖ It is generally believed that the still existing castle of Trim was built by the younger De Lacy, soon after this seige.

¶ Hanmer.

enjoy, as they hoped, more securely what remained. In this manner O'Brian, prince of Thomond, received from Henry a grant of part of that territory, for which he was
A. D. 1221. to pay a yearly rent of 130 marks.* The fate of Connaught, however, held forth but scanty encouragement to those inclined to rely on such specious compacts. In despite of the solemn engagement entered into by king John,† in the year 1219, assuring to Cathal the safe possession of a third part of Connaught, on the condition of his surrendering the other two parts to the king, the whole of that province was now, by a grant of Henry III., bestowed upon Richard de Burgh,—the factious baron who had caused so much trouble to the crown, in the reign of king John,—to be taken possession of by him after Cathal's death.

This violation of public faith was not allowed to pass unresisted or unrevenged. On the death of Cathal, which occurred soon after, the people of his province, re-
A. D. 1223. gardless of Henry's grant, and supported by the ever ready sword of O'Neill, proceeded to elect a successor to the chieftainship, and conferred that dignity upon Tirlogh, Cathal's brother. So daring a defiance of the will of the government called down on the offenders the vengeance of the lord justice, Geoffrey de Marisco; and a long furious struggle ensued, during which, the sovereignty of Connaught, after having passed from Tirlogh to Aedh, a son of Cathal, settled at last on the brow of Feidlim, another son of that prince.

However fertile were these dark times in acts of injustice, violence, and treachery, there are few events in which all these qualities can be found more odiously exemplified, than in the melancholy fate of the young Richard, earl marshal, son of the late protector of the realm. This lord, having incurred the resentment of Henry, by joining in
A. D. 1233. a confederacy against him, with the earl of Cornwall and other malcontent lords, found himself, without trial, deprived of his high office of marshal, and was forced to retire for safety into Wales; where entering into an alliance with Llewellyn and other chiefs of that province, he successfully defended one of his own castles that had been attacked by the king's troops, and made reprisals on the royal territories in return.

To repress such daring movements by force, would have been, on the king's part, no more than an exercise of a natural right of self-defence. But treachery was the means employed to get rid of this refractory young lord. By the base contrivance, as it is said, of the bishop of Winchester, Henry's chief adviser, letters under the kings seal, fraudulently obtained, were sent to the lord justice, Maurice Fitz-Gerald, to Hugh and Walter de Lacy, Richard de Burgh, Geoffrey de Marisco, and others of the Irish barons, informing them that Richard, late earl marshal of England, having been proscribed, banished, and deprived of his estates, by the king, yet still continuing in rebellion against his authority, it was required of these lords, that should Richard by chance land in Ireland, they should forthwith seize upon his person, and send him, dead or alive, to the king. In consideration, it was added, of this service, all the possessions and lands that had devolved to Richard in Ireland, and were now at the king's disposal, would by him be granted to them and their heirs forever.‡

So tempting a bribe, to men brought up in no very scrupulous notions of right and wrong, could not fail to appeal with irresistible effect; and from thenceforth, no art or treachery appears to have been spared to lure the victim into their toils. In order to in-
A. D. 1334. duce him to pass over into Ireland, exaggerated accounts were conveyed to him of the force of his immediate adherents; together with secret assurances of support from many of the barons themselves. Thus deceived as to the extent of his resources, he rashly ventured over with a guard of but fifteen followers, and, immediately on his arrival, was waited upon by the chief actor in the plot, Geoffrey de Marisco; who, reminding him of his ancient rights, and of the valiant blood flowing in his veins, advised him to avenge the insults he had received by attacking the king's territories without delay. This advice the unsuspecting young earl adopted; and, taking the field with whatever force he could hastily collect, succeeded in recovering some of his own castles, and got possession of the city of Limerick after a siege of but four days.§

Still farther to carry on the delusion till all should be ripe for his ruin, the treacherous barons now affected alarm at the success of his arms, as threatenep danger to the king's government; and, proposing a truce, requested an interview with him for the purpose

* Cox. According to Leland, but, I think, incorrectly, the payment was a yearly rent of 100*l.* and a fine of 1000 marks. "This was the only grant (says Cox) made by the crown of England to any mere Irishman to that time, excepting that to the king of Connaught."

† Cox. ‡ Mathew Paris.

§ "Limeric quoque famosam Hibernie civitatem quadriduana cepit obsidione."—*Mathew Paris.*

of arranging the terms. To this, little suspecting the treachery that hung over him, the gallant young earl assented; and, attended by Geoffrey de Marisco and about a hundred followers, proceeded to the place of conference on the great plain of Kildare. But it was soon manifest that he had been decoyed thither only to be betrayed. The pretence of a conference had been devised with the sole view of provoking a conflict: and the signal for onset having been given on the side of the barons, Richard found himself suddenly deserted by his perfidious prompter, De Marisco, who, drawing off eighty of the earl's band, left him with little more than the fifteen followers who had accompanied him from Wales, to stand the shock of a force ten times their number. Even thus abandoned and beset, the earl marshal kept his ground, till at length unhorsed, and attacked by a traitor from behind, who plunged a dagger up to the hilt in his back, he fell, all but lifeless, on the field; and being conveyed from thence to one of his own castles, which had just fallen into the hands of the justiciary, Maurice Fitz-Gerald, breathed his last, in the midst of enemies, with only a youth of his own household to watch over him in his dying moments.*

Richard was one of five brothers, the sons of the protector Pembroke, who all lived to be earls of Pembroke, and all died childless; in consequence of which default of heirs, the high and warlike house of Marshal became extinct. The death of this gallant nobleman, from the peculiar circumstances attending it, created a strong sensation, not only throughout Ireland, but in England where he was looked up to, says Mathew Paris, as "the very flower of the chivalry of modern times."† A. D. 1234.

Among the few legislative measures, directed to peaceful or useful objects, that greet the course of the historian through these times, must be mentioned a writ addressed by the king to his chief justice in Ireland, for free commerce between the subjects of both kingdoms,‡ without any impediment or restraint;—a measure which "some," it is added, "endeavoured to hinder, to the great prejudice of both."§

The rapacity and violence which had marked the conduct of De Burgh and his kinsman, throughout these contests, had been made known to Henry through various channels. Among others, Feidlim, the new dynast of Connaught, had addressed the king confidentially on the subject,‖ and requested leave to visit him in England, for the purpose of consulting with him on their mutual interests and concerns. After due deliberation, on the part of Henry, the conference with his royal brother of Connaught was accorded; and, so successfully did Feidlim plead his own suit, and expose the injustice of the grasping family opposed to him, that the king wrote to Maurice Fitz-Gerald, then lord justice, and, with a floridness of style, caught, as it would seem, from his new Irish associates, desired that he would "pluck up by the root that fruitless sycamore, De Burgh, which the earl of Kent, in the insolence of his power, had planted in those parts, nor suffer it to bud forth any longer."¶ A. D. 1240.

* "Cum uno tantum Juvene de suis inter hostes remansit."—*Mathæus Paris.* This story of the last days and death of the earl Richard occupies in the diffuse narrative of the old historian no less than fourteen or fifteen folio pages.

† "Militiæ flos temporum modernorum." The following are tributes to his fame from contemporary writers:—

"Anglia plange, Marescallam plangens lachrymare
Causa subest, quare quia pro te planxit amare.
Virtus militiæ, patriæ protectio," &c. &c.
Verses in the Annals of Waverly, ad. ann. 1234.

"Tho wende Richard the marschal, that of Pembroc erl was,
Into Irlonde to worri, in luther time alas!
* * * * * * * * *
Wat seiste,' quoth this gode erl, 'wan Richard the marschal
Ups is stede iarmed is, & atiled thoru out al,
& toward is fon in the feld hath is wombe iwent,
Seold he turne hom his regh? he has neuere so iseent.
Vor he ne dude it neuere, ne neuere iwis ne scal.
Fram such scendnesse Crist sculde Richard the Marscal.'"
Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle.

‡ Close Roll, 29 Henry III. Walter Hemingford, a chronicler, who himself lived in this reign, and of whom Leland (*Comment. de Script. Britann.*) says, that he narrated the events of his own time with the greatest care ("summa curâ.") yet states, that an army was led by the king at this time into Ireland, in consequence of the expedition thither of earl Richard, and that having pacified the country, after that lord's death, he returned the same year to England!

§ Prynne, cap. 76.

‖ Rymer, tom. i. 391.—The following is an extract from Feidlim's letter:—"Grates referimus infinitas; et maxime pro eo quod pro nobis Willielmo de Dene justo vesto Hiberniæ bonæ memoriæ pro restitutione habenda de dampnis nobis per Walterum de Burgo et suam seguelam, in terra nostra de Tyrmara, illatis, devote scripsisti." See also, writ for the safe conduct of Feidlim (ib. 423,) wherein he is styled "Fedlinius O'Cancanir, filius regis Conact."

¶ "Ut ipsius iniquæ palatationis, quam Comes Cantiæ Hubertus in illis partibus, dum suâ potentiâ debaccharet, plantavit, infructuosam sicomorum radicitus evulsam, non sineret amplius pullulare."

During the disputes that arose between Henry and two successive sovereigns of Wales, Llewellyn and David, respecting the claim of feudal superiority advanced by the
A. D. 1240. English king, a perpetual warfare continued to be maintained between the borderers of the two nations, which grew, at times, into sufficient importance to call into the field the respective sovereigns themselves. On an occasion of this kind, which occurred in the year 1245, the king, being then hard pressed by the Welsh, and likewise suffering from the intense severity of the winter, summoned to his aid Maurice Fitz-Gerald, with his Irish forces.* A letter written at the time, by a nobleman in Henry's camp, thus gives, with the freshness of a sketch taken at the moment, an account of the state of the English army. "The king with his army lyeth at Gannock, fortifying that
A. D. 1245. strong castle, and we live in our tents, thereby, watching, fasting, praying, and freezing with cold. We watch, for fear of the Welshmen, who are wont to invade and come upon us in the night-time; we fast, for want of meat, for the half-penny loaf is worth five-pence; we pray to God to send us home speedily; we starve with cold, wanting our winter garments, having no more but a thin linen cloth between us and the wind. There is an arm of the sea under the castle where we lie, whereto the tide cometh, and many ships come up to the haven, which bring victuals to the camp from Ireland and Chester."†

All this time the king was looking impatiently for the Irish forces. At length their sails, says the chronicler, were descried; the fleet reached the shore; and Maurice Fitz-Gerald, and the prince of Connaught, presented themselves in battle array before the king.‡ But the tardiness of the lord justice, on this pressing occasion, was by no means forgiven by his royal master. Among other peculiar rights which the Irish barons, in those times, claimed, it was asserted by them that they were not bound to attend the king beyond the realm; differing in this from the nobles of England, who were obliged by law to assist the king in his expeditions as well without as within the kingdom. That Henry was aware of the exemption claimed by them, is clear, from the writs issued by him on this occasion having been accompanied by an express declaration that their attendance now should not be brought forward as a precedent.§ To mark his displeasure, however, at the lord justice's conduct, he soon after dismissed him from his high office,—notwithstanding some eminent services performed recently by him in Ulster,—and appointed Fitz-Geoffrey de Marisco to be his successor; on which Fitz-Gerald, retiring from the world, took upon him the habit of St. Francis, and dying about ten years after, was buried in the friary of that order, of which he had himself been the founder, at Youghal. He had lived all his life, says Mathew Paris, worthily and laudably, with the sole exception of the mark of infamy left, unjustly, perhaps, upon his name, by the share he was supposed to have taken in the events that led to the melancholy death of earl Richard.

A similar requisition for military aid had been addressed by Henry, the preceding year,‖ to those Irish dynasts who had made their submission to the English government, desiring that they would join his standard with their respective forces in the expedition then meditated against the Scottish king. A list of the different Irish toparchs to whom this summons was addressed is found appended to the requisition, and they consist of about the same number, and are supposed to have been chiefly the same individuals who hastened to pay homage to king John, on his last expedition into Ireland.

The great charter of liberty communicated by Henry to his Irish subjects, proved, in the hands of those deputed to dispense its benefits, a worthless and barren gift. In vain were new writs issued, from time to time, by the English monarch, ordering the charter and laws of John to be observed. The absolute will of the petty tyrants among whom the country had been parcelled out now stood in the place of all law; and so low was
A. D. 1246. the crown compelled to stoop, in submission to a tyranny of its own creating, that, in a writ or mandate sent over by the king in the 30th year of his reign, we find him enjoining his lay and spiritual lords, that, for the sake of the peace and tranquillity of the kingdom, they should "permit" it to be governed by English law.¶

It must at the same time be always kept in mind, that this anxiety to extend to Ireland the benefit of English law, implied by no means a wish to include in that benefit the Irish people. It was only by rare and reluctant exceptions that the few natives admitted to the protection of the conqueror's law were invested with that high privilege. In a writ of Henry, granting this favour to two brothers, Mamorch and Rotheric, care is taken to mark the exception, by an assertion of the general principle;—the writ stating that

* Rymer, tom. i. 431. † Mathew Paris. ‡ Ware's *Annals*.
§ Close Roll, 28 Henry III. ‖ Rymer, tom. i. 315.
¶ "Quod pro pace et tranquillitate ejusdem terræ, per easdem leges eos regi et et deduci permittant."—*Pat. Roll*, 30 Henry III.

this favour is conferred upon them notwithstanding that they were Irishmen, and alleging as the grounds of the exception, that they and their forefathers had stood firmly by the English, in their wars against the natives.* This exclusive spirit, on the part of the state, called forth, even thus early, and while yet the two races were of one religion, an antagonist principle on the part of the Irish church,—the only portion of the native community that was still strong enough to make any effectual resistance. In a synod held about the year 1250, the archbishops, bishops, and clergy of Ireland, who were of Irish birth, enacted a decree that no Englishman born should be admitted a canon in any of their churches. A papal bull, however, issued at the instance of the king, compelled the clergy to rescind this retaliatory act. A. D. 1250.

There occurred, frequently, in the course of this reign, disputes between England and Scotland, arising out of those pretensions of feudal superiority on the part of England, which were carried to their highest pitch and realized by Henry's heroic successor. Among other preparations for an expected war, at one of those junctures, a writ was addressed by the English monarch to Donald, king of Tyrconnel, and about twenty other great Irish chiefs, requiring them to join him with their respective forces, in an expedition against Scotland.†

Another of those exigencies in which Henry had recourse for assistance to Ireland, occurred in the 38th year of his reign, when, under the apprehension that his dominions in Gascony were about to be invaded by the king of Castile, he issued writs to his lord justice in Ireland, pointing out how fatal to both countries might be the success of such an aggression, and urging him to embark, with all his friends, the following Easter, at Waterford, for the purpose of joining him, with horses, arms, and trusty soldiers, in Gascony. "Never, at any time," he adds, "would their aid and counsel be of such importance to him as the present." The same request was shortly after repeated, in writs directed "to the archbishops, bishops, &c.," whereby queen Elianor acquaints them that she had sent over John Fitz-Geoffrey, justiciary of Ireland, to explain to them the state of Gascony and imminent dangers of the crown; while, in another, they are told that their compliance with these requests will be "a measure redounding to their eternal honour."‡

From all this it may fairly be concluded, that, though so backward in many other essential points, this country already, in the peculiar aptitude of its people for military pursuits, contributed largely and usefully to the disposable strength of England for foreign warfare.

In contemplation of the approaching marriage between his son, prince Edward, and the infanta of Spain, Henry made a grant to him and his heirs for ever of the kingdom of Ireland, subjoining certain exceptions, and providing, by an express condition, that Ireland was never to be separated from the English crown.§ Not content with this provision, he also, in more than one instance, took care to assert his own jurisdiction, as supreme lord of that land; and even reserved and set aside certain acts of authority, such as the appointment of the lord justice, the issue of a writ of entry out of the Irish Court of Chancery, and one or two other acts of power, which the prince, presuming on his supposed rights, as lord of Ireland, had taken upon him to perform.‖ A. D. 1254.

The motive of the monarch, in thus superseding, occasionally, the authority of his son, arose doubtless from the same fear which appears to have influenced Henry II. under similar circumstances, lest the example of a completely separate and independent sovereign of Ireland, might, in after times, be adduced as a precedent for measures affecting the integrity and strength of the whole empire. How far the lot of that country might have been ameliorated or brightened, had prince Edward, as was once intended, gone over thither as lord lieutenant, and assumed personally the administration of its affairs, there is now no use in speculating. That he would have allowed any ordinary scruples, either of justice or humanity, to stand in the way of his stern policy, the course pursued by him afterwards in Scotland sufficiently forbids us to suppose. Whether, among the Irish chiefs of that day, he would have found or called forth a Bruce, a Douglas, or a Randolph, is a question involving too melancholy a contrast between the champions of the respective countries, to be more than thus glanced at in passing, and then left to the charity of silence.

These reflections are of course founded upon the generally received notion that

* "Quia si ipsi et antecessores sui sic se habuerunt cum Anglicis quamvis Hibernenses, injustum est, *hos Hibernenses sint*, quod." &c.—*Close Roll*, 37 Henry III.

† Pat. Roll, 28 Henry III. ‡ Pat. Roll, 38 Henry III.

§ Rymer. "Ita tamen quod predicta terra et castra omnia nunquam separentur a coronâ, sed integra remaneant regibus Anglie in perpetuum."

‖ See in Prynne, cap. 76., the memorable writ (as he styled it) of Henry to the chief justice of Ireland, to stop all proceedings in law upon the illegal writ issued by the prince, his son.

prince Edward was in Ireland; but there is reason to believe, though we find no mention of it in any of our histories, that he did once, for a short time, visit his Irish dominions.

A. D. 1255. There is, at least, extant, a royal mandate addressed by Henry in the year 1255, to this prince, approving of his project of passing over to Ireland from Gascony,* and remaining there for the winter,—with the view, as he adds, of reforming and regulating the state of that country; and that the prince may have put such an intention in practice, is rendered, in a high degree, probable, by the tenor of letters addressed to him by the king, in the very same year,† ordering him to convoke before him the prelates, barons, and other magnates of Ireland, for the purpose of consulting with them as to the redress and remedy of certain encroachments on their ancient rights complained of by the clergy.

Could a gallant example of self-defence have roused the Irish to an effective effort for their own deliverance, they had now, in the struggle of their brave neighbours the Welsh, against English aggression, a precedent worthy of being emulated by them;—for most truly was it said of that people, now armed to a man in defence of their mountain soil, that "their cause was just, even in the sight of their enemies."‡ In the course of this warfare, the earl of Chester, who was engaged for some time on

A. D. 1255. the side of the Welsh, had recourse for assistance to Ireland; but prince Edward, fitting out hastily a fleet, attacked the vessels which contained this Irish force, and having sunk the greater number of them, sent the remainder back with tidings of the defeat.

Shortly after, the king himself, renewing hostilities with the Welsh prince, Llewellyn, sent to ask for troops and supplies from Ireland, against the very cause she had lately so warmly espoused. Thus was it then, as it has been too frequently since, the hard fate of the Irish to be not only themselves the bond-slaves of England, but to be made, also, her unwilling instruments, in imposing the same yoke of slavery upon others.

In the year 1259 the office of lord justice was held by sir Stephen Longespè,§ who in an encounter with O'Neill, in the streets of Down, slew that chief and 350 of his followers. Before the end of the year, however, Longespé himself was treacherously

A. D. 1259. murdered by his own people. During the administration of his successor, William Den, a general rising of the Mac Carthys of Desmond threw all Munster into confusion.‖ This warlike sept, the ancient proprietors of the kingdom of Desmond, had, by the grants made to the Geraldines in that territory, been despoiled of almost the whole of their princely possessions. It was not, however, without fierce and frequent struggles that they suffered their soil to be thus usurped by the foreigners; and, at the time we now treat of, attacking suddenly a number of nobles and knights collected at Callan, they slew, among other distinguished Geraldines, the lord John Fitz-Thomas,

A. D. 1261. founder of the monastery of Tralee, together with Maurice, his son, eight barons, and fifteen knights. In consequence of this great success, says the chronicler, the Mac Carthys grew, for a time, so powerful, that "the Geraldines durst not put a plough into the ground in Desmond.¶

As usual, however, the dissension of the natives among themselves proved the safety and strength of the common enemy's cause. The mutual jealousy to which joint success so frequently leads now sprang up among the different septs, both of Carbery and Muskerry; and the Mac Carthys, O'Driscolls, O'Donovans, and Mac Mahons, who had lately joined, with such signal success, against the English being now disunited among themselves, fell powerless before them.

The remaining years of this long reign continued to roll on, at once dully and turbidly, in the same monotonous course of fierce but ignoble strife which had darkened its records from the commencement. As if schooled into civil discord by the example of the natives, scarcely had the swords of the great English lords found time to rest from their wars with the Mac Carthys and Mac Mahons, than they again drew them in deadly conflict against each other; and the families of the De Burghs and the Geraldines were now engaged in as fierce contention among themselves, as, but a short time before, they had

* The writ for the sailing of the prince to Ireland, may be found in Rymer, tom. i. p. 560, 561.

† Close Roll, 39 Henry III.

‡ "Causa autem eorum etiam hostibus eorum just a videbatur."

§ This officer, who was a descendant of the countess Ela of Salisbury (foundress of Lacock Abbey,) is styled, in the Book of Lacock, earl of Ulster; and Borlase, among others, has adopted the mistake. The truth is, Stephen Longespé married the widow of Hugh de Lacy, who had been made earl of Ulster by king John, and hence, no doubt the misconception. See *Annals and Antiquities of Lacock Abbey*, by the Rev. W. L. Bowles, pp. 154, 155.

‖ The Mac Carthys (says the old chronicler, in language worthy of his subject) "were now playing the devil in Desmond."

¶ Hanmer.

been waging jointly against the Irish. Walter de Burgh, who in consequence of his marriage with the daughter and heiress of Hugh de Lacy, had been created earl of Ulster, was, at this time, the head of the great house of the De Burghs; and to such a pitch had arisen the feud between them and the Geraldines, that, at a meeting held this year at Castle Dermond, Maurice Fitz-Maurice Fitz-Gerald, assisted by John Fitz-Thomas (afterwards earl of Kildare,) audaciously seized on the persons of Richard de Capella, the lord justice, of Richard de Burgh, heir apparent of Ulster, of Theobald le Butler, and one or two other great partisans of the family of the De Burghs, and committed them to prison in the castles of Ley and Dunamase.* A. D. 1264.

At length, the attention of the English monarch, already sufficiently distracted by the difficulties of his own position, was drawn to the disturbed state of his Irish dominions. A parliament or council was held at Kilkenny, by whose advice the prisoners so arbitrarily detained by the Geraldines were released; and the king, recalling the present lord justice, appointed in his place David Barry (the ancestor of the noble family of Barrymore,) who, curbing the insolent ambition of the Geraldines, restored peace between the two rival houses.

Among those unerring symptoms of a weak and vicious system of policy, which meet the eye on the very surface of the dreary history we are pursuing, may be reckoned the frequent change of chief governors;—showing how uneasy, under such laws, was power, as well to the rulers as the ruled. David Barry had been but a few months the lord justice, when he was replaced by sir Robert de Ufford, during whose administration there came over a writ from king Henry to levy *aurum reginæ* for Elianor, the wife of prince Edward. This act of sovereignty, exercised by Henry in Ireland, sufficiently proves how far from his intention it had been to cede to his son the right of dominion over that realm. But a still stronger proof is afforded by a writ issued in the same year,† wherein he annuls a grant of some lands made by Edward, without his permission, and transfers them to the son of his own brother, Richard, earl of Cornwall. A. D. 1267.

During the administration of sir James Audley, or Aldethel, the last but one of the numerous chief governors who administered the affairs of the country during this reign, a more than ordinary effort of vigour was made by the natives to wreak vengeance, at least, on their masters, if not to right and emancipate themselves. Rising up in arms all over the country, they burned, despoiled, and slaughtered in every direction, making victims both of high and low. In the country then called Offaley, all the fortified places were destroyed by them; while, in the mean time, the prince of Connaught, availing himself of the general excitement, took the field against Walter de Burgh, earl of Ulster, and putting his forces to rout, killed, among a number of other nobles and knights, the lords Richard and John de Verdon. A. D. 1270.

In the year 1272, this long reign—the longest to be found in the English annals—was brought to a close: and the few meager and scattered records which have been strung together in this chapter comprise all that Ireland furnishes towards the history of a reign whose course, in England, was marked by events so pregnant with interest and importance,—events which by leading to a new distribution of political power, were the means of introducing a third estate into the constitution of the English legislature. It is somewhat remarkable, too, that the very same order of men, the fierce and haughty barons, who laid the foundation, at this time, in Ireland, of a system of provincial despotism, of which not only the memory but the vestiges still remain, should have been likewise, by the strong force of circumstances, made subservient to the future establishment of representative government and free institutions in England.

* Annal. Hib. ap. Camd.—Dunamase, signifying the Fortress of the Plain, was in ancient times, the stronghold of the O'Moores, princes of *Ley*. As this rock bounded the English Pale on the west, a castle was built there for the protection of the vicinity, which Vallancey thinks must have been erected about the beginning of Henry the Third's reign; as, nearly at the same time, the castle of Ley, a structure similar in its general style of architecture, and about eight miles distant, was erected by the barons of Offaley on the banks of the Barrow."—*Collectanea*, vol. ii.

† See this writ in Cox.

CHAPTER XXXV.

EDWARD I.

Laws of England not yet extended to the Irish.—Revolt of the natives—seize on the person of the lord deputy, and defeat his successor in battle.—Wars of De Clare in Thomond—his treachery to the contending chiefs—is defeated by Tirlogh O'Brian.—Petition of the Irish to be admitted to the benefits of English law—the king favourable to their request.—Grant of charters of denization.—Continuance of the feud between the Geraldines and the De Burghs.—Great power of the earl of Ulster.—Contest between De Vescy and the baron of Offaley—triumph of the latter, and his insolence in consequence—throws the earl of Ulster into prison.—Truce between the Geraldines and De Burghs.—A parliament assembled.—Irish forces summoned to join the king in Scotland.—Savage murders committed both by English and Irish.

THERE had now elapsed exactly a century from the time of the landing of Henry II.; and it would be difficult to pronounce a severer or more significant comment upon
A. D. 1272. the policy pursued by the rulers of Ireland, during that period, than is found in a petition addressed to king Edward, in an early part of his reign, praying that he would extend to the Irish the benefit of the laws and usages of England.*

It was the wise boast of the Romans, that their enemies, on the day they were conquered, became their fellow citizens;† and one of the most eloquent of the Roman philosophers demands, "What would have become of the empire had not a kindly Providence mixed up together the victors and the vanquished?"‡ Far different was the policy adopted by the rude satraps of the English colony, who, seeing no safety for their own abused power but in the weakness of those subjected to them, took counsel of their fears, and, never relaxing the unsure hold, continued through ages to keep the Irish in the very same hostile and alien state in which they had found them.

The reign of Edward I., which forms so eventful a portion of England's history and, combines in its course so rare and remarkable a mixture of the brilliant and the solid, the glorious and the useful, presents, as viewed through the meager records of Ireland, a barren and melancholy waste—unenlivened even by those fiery outbreaks of just revenge, which, at most other periods, flash out from time to time, lighting up fearfully the scene of suffering and strife. In the first year, indeed, of this reign, before the return of Edward from abroad, advantage was taken of his absence, by the natives, to make a sudden and desperate effort for their own deliverence.§ Attacking the castles of Roscommon Aldleck, and Sligo, they dismantled, or, as it is said, destroyed them;‖ and at
A. D. 1272. the same time were enabled, through the treachery of his followers, to seize the person of the lord justice, Maurice Fitz-Maurice, and cast him into prison.¶

This nobleman was succeeded in his high office by the lord Walter Genevil, newly returned from the Holy Land, during whose administration the Scots and Red-
A. D. 1273. shanks, out of the Highlands, made a sudden incursion into Ireland, and committing the most cruel murders and depredations, escaped with their booty before the inhabitants had time to rally in their defence. Shortly after, however, a considerable force under Richard de Burgh and sir Eustace de Poer, invading, in their turn, the Highlands and Scottish isles, spread desolation wherever they went, putting to death all whom they could find; while such as dwelt, in the manner of the ancient Irish, in caves, were smoked out from thence, like foxes from their holes, or destroyed by suffocation.

The successor of Genevil in the government of the country was Robert de
A. D. 1267. Ufford, now for the second time lord justice; and the five or six following years, during which, personally, or through his deputy, Stephen de Fulburn, he managed the affairs of the country, were distracted by a series of petty wars, in which not only

* Prynne, cap lxxvi. 957

† "Conditor noster Romulus tantum apientia valuit, ut plerosque populos eodem die hostes deinde cives habuerit."—*Tacitus.*

‡ "Quid hodie esset imperium, nisi salubris providentia victos permiscuisset victoribus?"—*Seneca.*

§ "Quasi omnes Hiberni guerraverunt," says a MS. fragment, cited by Cox, respecting this general revolt.

‖ Hanmer. ¶ Ware's *Annals.*

English fought with Irish, but the Irish, assisted by the arms of the foreigner, fought no less bitterly against their own countrymen. At the great battle of Glandelory, the English were defeated with much slaughter; and among the numerous prisoners taken is mentioned William Fitz-Roger, prior of the king's hospitallers. On the other hand, Ralph Pippard, assisted by O'Hanlon, gave, in the same year, a severe check to the great chieftain O'Neill.*

But it was in Thomond that the scenes most tumultuous and most disgraceful to the English name were now exhibited. A large grant of lands, in Thomond, had been, about this time, bestowed upon Thomas de Clare, son of the earl of Gloucester;—whether by grant from the crown, or as a gift from one of the O'Brian family,† does not very clearly appear. Having thus got footing in that territory, De Clare proceeded on a course of open and flagrant treachery, such as proved both the simplicity of his victims, and his own daring craft. Taking advantage of the fierce strife then raging among the O'Brians for the succession to the throne of Thomond, he contrived, by supporting and betraying each of the rivals, in turn, to enrich and aggrandize himself at the expense of all. To enter into the details of these multiplied treacheries would be an almost endless task; but the following is a brief outline of the events as they are found related in the Annals of Inisfallen.‡ A. D. 1277.

Forming an alliance with Brian Ruadh, whose nephew Tirlogh was then contending with him for the principality, De Clare, attended by Brian himself, marched an army of English and Irish against his competitor. In the battle which then ensued, the allied forces under the English lord were utterly defeated; and among the slain was Patrick Fitz-Maurice, the son and heir of Fitz-Maurice of Kerry, and brother to De Clare's wife. As it was in Brian's cause this calamitous defeat had been incurred, the conclusion drawn by the barbarous logic of De Clare was, that upon him, first the disaster ought to be avenged; and, the wife and father-in-law of Fitz-Maurice being the most loud in demanding this sacrifice, the wretched chieftain was put to death, and, according to some accounts, with peculiar refinement of cruelty.§ A. D. 1277.

The manner in which De Clare followed up this crime affords a sequel, in every way, worthy of it. To Tirlogh, against whom he had so lately fought, in conjunction with Brian, he made a merit of having thus removed so formidable a rival; while, at the same time, he entered into negotiations with Donogh O'Brian, the son of the murdered prince, and engaged to assist him in gaining the throne of Thomond. To effect this object, and put down the pretensions of the usurper, a force was collected under the joint command of De Clare and Donogh, which, making an impetuous attack upon Tirlogh, drove him, as the annalist describes the locality, "to the east of the wood of Forbair." The Irish chieftain, however, making his way back through defiles and by-ways with which he was acquainted, fell upon the confederates by surprise, and gained so decisive a victory, that they were forced to surrender to him half of the country of Thomond, leaving the remainder in the hands of the rightful successor, Donogh. De Clare, in drawing off his troops from the territories of these chiefs, said significantly, that "the first of them who would lay waste the other's lands, should be his declared friend for life." In one of these battles, fought by this lord with the Irish, himself and his father-in-law, Fitz-Maurice, were drawn, with a part of their force, into a pass in the mountains of Slieve Bloom, and there compelled to surrender at discretion.

While such was the state of Thomond, in almost every other direction the same strife and struggle prevailed; the infatuated natives performing actively the work of the enemy, by butchering each other. Thus, in a battle between the king of Connaught and the chief of the Mac Dermots of Moy-Lurg, the army of Connaught was utterly defeated

* Hanmer.

† According to Lodge, "all that tract of Thomond which extends from Limerick to Ath Solais, was bestowed by Bryan Ruadh, prince of Thomond, upon Thomas de Clare, in consideration of this lord coming with the English troops to reinstate him in his kingdom." But, according to others, this immense property was a reckless gift from the crown: and a grant (Pat. Roll. 4 Ed. 1.,) of ample liberties in his lands of Thomond to Thomas de Clare, seems to confirm this statement.—See Ryley's *Placit. Parliamentar.*, Appendix, 439.

‡ MS., translated by Charles O'Connor of Belanagare, and now in the possession of Messrs. Smith and Hodges, Dublin. Though Leland cites these annals as an authority for his account of De Clare's proceedings in Thomond, the statements made by him differ entirely from those found in the Annals.

§ The particulars of this treacherous act, as given by the Annalist, are as follows:—"The earl of Clare's son took Brian Roe O'Brian prisoner very deceitfully, after they had sworn to each other all the oaths in Munster—as bells, relics of saints, and bachals—to be true to one another; also after they became sworn gossips, and for confirmation of this third indissoluble bond of perpetual friendship, they drew part of the blood of one another, which they put in a vessel and mingled it together. After all which protestations, the said Brian was taken, as aforesaid, and bound to a steed; and so was tortured to death by the said earl's son."

A. D. 1277. with the loss of two thousand men, and the king himself slain. It was with reference to this battle that the lord justice, Robert de Ufford, when called to account by king Edward for permitting such disorders, replied shrewdly, that "he thought it not amiss to let rebels murder one another, as it would save the king's coffers, and purchase peace for the land."*

A. D. 1280. It is clear that the petition addressed to the king, by the natives, praying for the privileges of English law, had not yet been even taken into consideration by the barons, as we find Edward, in the present year, again calling upon the lords spiritual and temporal, as well as the whole body of English subjects in "the Land of Ireland,"† to assemble and deliberate upon that prayer. Intimating clearly the views he himself entertained on the subject, and the nature of the decision, which, if left to his own clear sense and vigorous will, he could not have failed to adopt, he yet declares, that without the concurrence of at least the prelates and nobles of the land, he should not feel justified in granting the desired boon. With evident allusion, however, to certain excuses alleged by the barons for not sooner applying themselves to the subject, he enjoins strictly, that they shall by no means omit, in consequence of the absence of any of their body, whether owing to business or from their being under age, to meet at the time, which he had appointed, and to give to the subject such full and mature deliberation, as might serve to point out to him the line of policy most expedient for him to adopt.‡

The petitioners, though styled, in vague language, "the community" of Ireland, were, in all probability, only the inhabitants of the districts bordering on the English settlement, who, from contiguity of property and other causes, were brought the most frequently into collision with the king's subjects, in matters of law as well as of warfare; and naturally wished, by acquiring possession of the same rights and privileges as were enjoyed by their neighbours, to share with them the safeguard of English law, instead of knowing it only as an instrument of oppression.

As the crown in those times, required to be bribed into justice, these wretched petitioners did not forget that necessary consideration, but offered to pay into the king's treasury 8000 marks, on condition that he would grant their request; and the king, in his reply to the lord justice,§ begins by mentioning—what was, with him, doubtless, not the least interesting part of the transaction—this tender of a sum of money; it having been, throughout his whole reign, one of the most pressing objects of his policy to raise supplies for the constant warfare, both foreign and internal, in which he was engaged. He then proceeds, in this letter, to say that, inasmuch as the laws used by the Irish were hateful in the sight of God, and so utterly at variance with justice as not to deserve to be regarded as laws, he had considered the question deliberately, with the aid of his council, and it had appeared to them sufficiently expedient to grant to that people the English laws:—provided always, that the common consent of the English settlers, or at least of their well-disposed prelates and nobles, should lend sanction to such a measure.‖

Thus laudibly anxious was this great prince to settle calmly the question, then first brought into discussion, whether the Irish were to be ruled by the same laws, and enjoy the same rights and privileges, as the English; a question which, under various forms and phases, has remained, essentially, down to the present day, in almost the same state in which Edward then found and left it. Notwithstanding the urgent terms of the royal mandate, no farther step appears to have been taken on this important subject, either by king or barons; and it may be concluded, indeed, from the records of licenses¶ granted in this and subsequent reigns, admitting certain favoured individuals to the privileges of English law, that no such general measure of denization as the Irish had prayed for, and the throne wisely recommended, was, throughout that whole period, conceded.

A. D. 1286. Mean while, the entire country continued to be convulsed with constant warfare, not only of Irish with English, but of the natives and settlers respectively among themselves, and the long-standing feud between the Geraldines and the De Burghs was, owing to the power of the great families enlisted in it, prolonged through the greater part of this reign. But the deaths, in 1286, of the two leading barons, Gerald Fitz-Maurice and the lord Thomas de Clare, threw the ascendency, without farther dispute,

* Cox.

† The district occupied by the English, and known, at a later period, by the name of the Pale, was at this time, and for some centuries after called "the *Land* of Ireland."

‡ Pat. Roll, 8 Ed. I.

§ This letter of the king is given in full by Leland.

‖ In order to turn this concession to the most profitable account, for the recruitment of his fiscal and military means, he desired the lord justice to agree with the petitioners for the highest sum of money he could obtain; and also to stipulate that they should hold in readiness a certain number, as might be agreed upon, of good and able foot soldiers, to repair to him whensoever he should think fit to summon their aid.

¶ The form of these licenses may be seen in Prynne, 958.

into the hands of the De Burghs; the powerful head of which family, Richard, earl of Ulster, commonly called the Red Earl, attained, during this reign, such immense authority, that his name is frequently, in the king's letters, found mentioned before that of the lord justice. Presuming upon this great power, and without any grounds, as it appears, but his own grasping self-will, he laid claim to the lands in Meath inherited by Theobald de Verdon, in right of Margaret, his mother, daughter of Walter de Lacy. With a large tumultuary force, De Burgh invaded this territory, and besieged De Verdon in one of his castles;* but no other result of this daring aggression is mentioned, than the usual havoc and horror attendant on such inroads. A. D. 1288.

It was during the time when John Sandford, archbishop of Dublin, held the office of chief governor, that the irruption just mentioned took place; and the same period is rendered, in another sense, memorable, by the statute entitled "An Ordinance for the State of Ireland," which was made in the seventeenth year of this reign, and which, in the now defunct controversy respecting the right of the English parliament to bind Ireland, forms part of the evidence adduced in support of that questioned right.† A. D. 1289.

The reader has already been prepared, on entering into this Anglo-Irish period, to find the people of the land thrown darkly into the background of their country's history, while a small colony of foreign intruders usurp, insultingly, their place.‡ So lamentably is this the case, that it is only in the feuds and forays of the English barons that the historian—if he may lay claim to such a title—can find materials for his barren and unhonoured task. A personal quarrel of this description, which now occurred, excited in both countries, from the peculiar circumstances attendant upon it, a more than ordinary share of attention. William de Vescy, a lord high in favour with Edward, having been appointed lord justice of Ireland in the year 1290, a mutual jealousy sprung up between him and John Fitz-Thomas Fitz-Gerald, baron of Offaley,§ which broke out, at last, into open enmity; and each, accusing the other of treason and rebellion, hurried to England to lay their complaints before the king. A. D. 1290.

Being admitted to plead their cause before him, in council, they there poured out upon each other speeches full of abuse and recrimination, of which a report, professing to be faithful, is preserved by the English chronicler.‖ De Vescy having, by his marriage with one of the co-heiresses of the house of Pembroke, become possessor of the actual territory of Kildare, while Fitz-Thomas was but the titular earl of that district, the latter alluded thus to this circumstance, in one of his speeches:—"By your honour and mine, my lord, and by king Edward's hand, you would if you durst, approach me in plain terms of treason or felony. For, where I have the title, and you the fleece, of Kildare, I wot well how great an eye-sore I am in your sight; so that, if I might be handsomely trussed up for a felon, then might my master, your son, become a gentleman." When their cause was again heard, before the king in council, Fitz-Thomas concluded his speech with the following defiance:—"Whereforc, to justify that I am a true subject, and that thou, Vescy, art an arch-traitor to God and my king, I here, in the presence of his highness, and in the hearing of this honourable assembly, challange the combat." Whereat (says the chronicler) all the auditory shouted.¶

De Vescy accepted the challange; but, on the day fixed for the combat, when all was ready, the lists prepared, and a crowd assembled to witness the trial, it was found that he had withdrawn privately to France. This unchivalrous step being regarded as an avowal of guilt, the king bestowed on the baron of Offaley the lordships of Kildare and Rathangan, which had hitherto been held by his rival, saying that, "though De Vescy had conveyed his person to France, he had left his lands behind him in Ireland."** Elated with this great success, the ambitious and turbulent lord of Offaley indulged, unrestrainedly, on his return to Ireland, in a course of insulting aggression upon all who had, in any manner, opposed his domineering views; and among the first objects of his hostility was Richard de Burgh, earl of Ulster, whom he took prisoner, together with his brother in Meath, and confined them both in the strong castle of Ley.†† He then transferred the scene of his activity to Kildare, where the Irish, rising in immense force, under Calwagh, brother of the king of Offaley, had seized on the castle of A. D. 1294.

* Marlaburrough.—Davies.

† See this work, chap. xxxii. p. 296. *et seq.*

‡ Ibid.

§ This lord, who sat as baron of Offaley, in the parliament of 1295, is, in the pedigree of the earls of Kildare, made the seventh lord Offaley.—See *Ledge*. He had issue two sons, says the same authority;—John, the eighth lord of Offaley, created earl of Kildare; and Maurice, created earl of Desmond. A report on Ireland, in the State Papers (K. Henry VIII.,) in speaking of William de Vescy, styles him "one Vescy, which was lord of Kildar befor ther was aney erle of Kildar."—Vol. ii.

‖ Holinshed.

¶ See Rymer, tom. ii.; "De adjornatione duelli inter Willielmum de Vescy et Johannem filium Thomæ."

** Cox.

†† Annal. Hibern. ap. Camden.

Kildare, and burnt all the rolls and tallies relating to the county records and accounts. Between its English and Irish depredators, that district was entirely laid waste, and death and desolation followed wherever they went.

At length an attempt was made, during the government of sir John Wogan, to moderate the dissensions of these lawless barons; and a truce for two years having been agreed upon between the Giraldines and the De Burghs, the lord justice was enabled, by this short respite from strife, to consider of some means of remedying the unquiet and A. D. disorganized state of the kingdom. A general parliament was accordingly as- 1295. sembled by him, which, though insignificant in point of numbers, passed some measures of no ordinary importance and use.* It was during this reign, as the reader will recollect, that the parliament of England, after a long series of progressive experiments, was moulded into its present shape; nor did a house of commons, before this period, form a regular and essential part of the English legislature.† In Ireland, where, from obvious causes, the materials of a third estate were not easily to be found, the growth of such an institution would be, of course, proportionably slow; and the assemblies held there during this reign, and for some time after, though usually dignified with the name of parliament, differed but little, it is clear, in their constitution, from those ancient common councils, at which only the nobles and ecclesiastics, together with, occasionally, a few tenants *in capite*, and, perhaps, the retainers of some of the great lords, were expected to give their attendance.

Among the acts passed by this parliament, there is one ordaining a new division of the kingdom into counties; the division established under king John, as well as the distribution then made of sheriffs, having been found defective and inconvenient.‡ Another object that engaged their attention was the defenceless state of the English territory, and the harassing incursions of the natives dwelling upon its borders; and, as this scourge was owing chiefly to the absence of the lords marchers, it was now enacted that all such marchers as neglected to maintain their necessary wards should forfeit their lands. Among other measures for the maintenance of a military force, it was ordained that all absentees should assign, out of their Irish revenues, a competent portion for that purpose:—a proof how early the anomalies involved in the forced connexion between the two countries began to unfold their disturbing effects. To check the private expeditions, or forays, of the barons, a provision was made that, for the future, no lord should wage war but by license of the chief governor, or by special mandate of the king. With a like view to curbing the power of the great lords, an effort was made at this time to limit the number of their retainers, by forbidding every person, of whatever degree, to harbour more of such followers than he could himself maintain; and for all exactions and violences committed by these idle-men, or kerns (as they were styled,) their lords were to be made answerable.§

To this parliament is likewise attributed an ordinance,—belonging, really however, to a somewhat later period,—which, in reference to the tendency already manifested by the English to conform to the customs and manners of the natives, ordains that all Englishmen should still, in their garb and the cut of their hair, adhere to the fashion of their own country; that whoever, in the mode of wearing their hair, affected to appear like Irishmen, would be treated as such; that their lands and chattels would be seized, and themselves imprisoned.

During the two or three following years, supplies of troops were sent from Ire- A. D. land, at different intervals, to the aid of the king in his Scottish wars;‖ the sort of 1298. warfare the Irish were accustomed to among their own lakes and mountains, rendering them a force peculiarly suited to the present state of the war in Scotland, where the northern and mountainous parts of the country alone remained to be subdued. A. D. In the spring of the present year, John Wogan, the lord justice, having been 1299. summoned to join the king,¶ in Scotland, repaired thither with a select force, and

* Black Book of Christ Church, Dublin.—See Ledwich (*Hist. and Antiquities of Irishtown and Kilkenny,*) who confounds this parliament with one held in 1309.

† Speaking of the ordainers in the following reign, Lingard says, "From the tenor of the ordinances, it is plain that the authority of the parliament was hitherto supposed to reside in the baronage, the great council of former reigns. The commons had nothing to do but to present petitions and to grant money."

‡ For the different divisions of the kingdom into counties by John and Edward I., see Ware, *Antiq.* c. 5. Whatever may have been the improved distribution made by Edward I., it is clear that the ancient form, which allotted one sheriff to Connaught, and another to Roscommon, was still in use in the time of Edward II. Thus we find in rolls of that reign, Gerald Tirrel, "vice-comes de Roscommon," and Henry Bermingham, "nuper vice-comes Connaciæ."—See Serjeant Mayart's Answer to Sir R. Bolton, *Hibernica*, 35.

§ Black Book of Christ Church, Dublin.

‖ The contributions of Ireland towards this object had commenced some time before, and a tenth of the revenues of the clergy had been granted for it.—Rymer, tom. ii. 519, tom. iii. 462.

¶ "The king sent unto John Wogan, lord justice, commanding him to give summons unto the nobles of Ireland, to prepare themselves with horse and armour, to come in their best array for the war, to serve against the Scots."—*Holinshed.*

joining in the pageant of that invasion, was, together with his followers, royally feasted by the triumphant monarch, at Roxburgh castle.* During this expedition of the lord justice, William de Ross, prior of Kilmainham, was left to act as his deputy; and the natives, availing themselves of the absence of so many of the choicest of the English nobles and soldiers, broke out into rebellion in several places. The people of the Maraghie mountains burnt Leighlin and other towns; but in Orgiel,† where O'Hanlon and Mac Mahon endeavoured to rouse the spirit of their countrymen, they were both of them vanquished and slain.

On the return of Wogan from Scotland, a few years of unwonted tranquillity ensued; owing chiefly, as it appears, to the skill and firmness with which this functionary, who was evidently a favourite with king Edward, succeeded in keeping down the old family feud between the De Burghs and the Geraldines:—so much has the tranquillity of Ireland, at all periods, depended on the example and judicious conduct of her chief nobles and rulers. A. D. 1298.

During the remaining nine years of this reign, the Irish records supply us with few occurrences worthy of any notice. On the renewed revolt of the Scots, under the regent, John Cummin, the earl of Ulster, with a large force, and accompanied by Eustace de Poer, went to the king's aid in Scotland,—the earl having created thirty-three knights, in the castle of Dublin, before his departure.‡ Among these summoned to attend the king, was Edmund le Botiller, afterwards earl of Carrick, who hastened to Dublin to embark with his followers for that purpose. But some disturbances having just then occurred, it was not thought advisible that he should leave the kingdom; and Edward, offended at his absence, refused to grant him livery of some lands that had lately fallen to him. On being made acquainted, however, with the truth of the matter, the king ordered the livery to be granted.§ A. D. 1303.

Though war, and its attendant horrors, must form, in all cases, too large a portion of the historian's theme, the enumeration of a list of mere private murders is a task to which rarely his pen is called upon to descend. When the victims, however, are of high rank and station, and when—as, unfortunately, was the case in more countries than Ireland, at this period—murders are held to be little else than a sort of private warfare, the duty of noticing them, however revolting, cannot honestly be avoided. I shall therefore recount, and as nearly as possible in the brief language employed by the chronicler, some barbarous events of this kind which occurred in the last years of Edward's reign; and it will be seen that both English and Irish were alike implicated in the savage actions recorded.

In the year 1305, Murtogh O'Connor, king of Offaley, and his brother Calwagh, were murdered in Pierce Bermingham's house, at Carbery, in the county of Kildare;‖ and in the same year, sir Gilbert Sutton, seneschal of Wexford, was put to death in the house of Hamon le Gras; the host himself, who was of the ancient family of Grace having narrowly escaped the same fate.¶ In the following year, O'Brian, prince of Thomond, was also murdered; and Donald Ruadh, the king of Desmond, met with the same violent end, at the hands of his son, Daniel Oge M'Carthy. About the same time, on a wider scale of murder, the sept of the O'Dempseys made great slaughter of the O'Connors, near Geashill, in Offaley; and O'Dempsey, the chief of the O'Regans, was, on the same occasion, slain. Shortly after, Pierce Bermingham suffered a defeat in the marches of Meath, and the town of Ballymore was burnt by the Irish. On this, the war spread rapidly throughout that whole district, and the English were summoned out of the other provinces to the relief of Leinster, where, in a hard-fought battle, at Glenfell, sir Thomas Madeville, the English leader, had his horse killed under him, and his troops thrown into confusion; but at length succeeded, by skilful captainship, in retrieving the fortunes of the day.** A. D. 1305. A. D. 1306.

Among the events of the last year of this reign, we find recorded the murder of an Irishman, Murtogh Balloch, by an English knight, sir David Canton, or Condon; and the circumstances attending the act must have been of no ordinary atrocity, as, by a rare instance of justice, in such cases, the English knight was hanged, in Dublin, for this murder, in the second year of the following reign. A rising of the A. D. 1307.

* Holinshed.—At Roxborough, says Dr. Lingard, the king "found himself at the head of 8000 horse and 80,000 foot, principally Irish and Welsh.

† A territory comprehending the present Louth, Monaghan, and Armagh.

‡ Annal. Hibern.

§ Carte's Life of Ormond, *Introduct.* See evidences of the Earl of Ormond's Lands, taken out of an old Ledger, b. 31. Ed. I. *Lambeth*, 606. fol. 9.

‖ Holinshed.

¶ Annal. Hibern.

** Ibid.

O'Kellys, in Connaught, where they surprised and slew a number of English, and some daring efforts of the wild mountaineers of Offaley, who destroyed the castle of Geashill, and burnt the town of Ley, are among the last of the miserable records contributed by Ireland to the history of a reign, whose whole course, as traced through England's proud annals, present such a series of shining achievements, both in legislation and warfare, as no period, perhaps, of the same duration, in the history of any other country, ever yet equalled.

It was in the seventh year of this reign, under the administration of sir Stephen de Fulburn, that a new kind of coin was struck by order of the king,—who, having, highly to his honour, fixed a certain rule or standard for money, in England, applied the same rule to the regulation of the mints in Ireland, both in the weight and fineness. He also descried, a few years after, by proclamation, the base money called crockards and pollards.*

CHAPTER XXXVI.

EDWARD II.

The new king, on his accession, recalls Gaveston from banishment—sends him to Ireland as lord-lieutenant.—Rivalry between Gaveston and the earl of Ulster—his government active and beneficial.—Strong interest felt by the Irish in the fortunes of Robert Bruce.—Bruce takes refuge in the Isle of Rachlin—his expedition from thence attended by two Irish princes.—Effects of the victory of Bannockburn on the minds of the Irish.—Deputies sent by them to invite Bruce to Ireland.—Landing of Edward Bruce at Larne.—Consternation of the English authorities.—Cause of the English espoused by Feidlim, prince of Connaught.—The earl of Ulster defeated by the Scots.—Great battle between the O'Connors.—Feidlim O'Connor joins the Scots.—Successful progress of the invaders.—The English defeated in Meath and in Kildare.—General rebellion of the Irish.—Great battle at Athenry.—Feidlim's army defeated and himself killed.—Landing of Robert Bruce in Ireland.—The earl of Ulster suspected of concert with the Scots—is thrown into prison.—Intrepid conduct of the citizens of Dublin.—Robert Bruce at the Salmon-leap.—Dreadful famine, and severe sufferings of the Scots.—Inaction and indecision of the English leaders.—Retreat of the Scots into Ulster.—Departure of Robert Bruce.—Earl of Ulster liberated.—Ordinance for annual parliaments.—Mutual hostility of the English and Irish churches.—Great battle between Edward Bruce and the English near Dundalk.—The Scots defeated, and Bruce himself slain.—Remonstrance addressed to the pope by O'Neill and his brother chieftains.—Suppression of the knights Templars in Ireland.

A. D. 1307. One of the first acts of Edward II., on his accession, was to recall his favourite, Gaveston, from banishment; a step which his father, on his death-bed, had solemnly forbidden under pain of his malediction. Shortly after, too, when Edward passed over into France, for the purpose of espousing the beautiful Isabella, daughter of Philip the Fair, he appointed Gaveston to be regent of the kingdom during his absence, with powers that usually, on such occasions, were reserved by the sovereign to himself.† In like manner, the high distinction of carrying the crown at the coronation, and walking immediately before the king, had, with insulting neglect of the claims of the ancient nobility, been allotted to this foreign minion. The anger of the barons, at these proceedings, soon found a vent in the voice of parliament, which, demanding the immediate expulsion of Gaveston from the country, compelled the favourite himself to swear he would never return, and bound the bishops to excommunicate him should he violate his oath.

A. D. 1307.

Though thus deprived of his favourite's society, the king was determined still to uphold and advance his fortunes; and, having bestowed upon him new grants of land, both in

* Ware, *Antiquities*, chap. 32. "To this coinage I am inclined to refer a very curious penny found at Youghal in 1830, together with a large hoard of English and Irish coins of Edward I., and now in the cabinet of the Dean of St. Patrick's. It exactly resembles the penny of this reign, but is of ruder work, and bears the king's head without the triangle."—Lindsey, *View of the Coinage of Ireland.*

† Lingard.

England and Gascony, he accompanied him on his supposed exile as far as Bristol. From that port Gaveston sailed; but, to the surprise and mortification of all who had expected to see him humbled, it was now discovered that Ireland was the chosen place of his banishment;* that he had been sent thither as the king's lieutenant,† and went loaded with the royal jewels. A. D. 1308.

During the short period of his administration, there was no want of, at least, activity in the new viceroy, whom our records represent as being almost constantly in the field, engaging and subduing the refractory chiefs, and enforcing obedience to the English power.‡ But like most governors of that country, both before his time and since, he applied himself solely to the task of suppressing rebellion, forgetting the higher duty of investigating and endeavouring to remove its causes.

In so confined a sphere as formed the compass of English dominion at this time in Ireland, it would have been difficult for two such potent lords as the king's favourite, and the Red Earl, to move in their respective orbits of rule, without coming hostilely into collision. It was, of course, with no ordinary feelings of jealousy, that the haughty De Burgh, whose name took precedence of that of the representative of majesty, saw an upstart thus put in possession of the royal resources of the realm; while to Gaveston, it could have been no less galling and mortifying, to find himself confronted by the princely state and feudal authority of the proud earl. Shortly after the lieutenant's arrival, a grand feast was given by De Burgh, in the lordly castle of Trim, where, in the course of the pomps and festivities of the day, he conferred upon two of the noble family of De Lacy the honour of knighthood.§

Among the benefits resulting from Gaveston's government is mentioned, particularly, the attention paid by him to public works; several castles, bridges, and causeways having been constructed, we are told, during his administration. But, however beneficial his continuance in that post might have proved to the country,—depravity of morals being, in him, not incompatible with shining and useful talents,—the infatuated monarch could no longer endure his favourite's absence, and he was immediately recalled to England; the pope absolving him from his late vow, and the barons, in consequence of the king's promises of amendment, giving their consent to his return. A. D. 1309.

The successor of Gaveston, at the head of the government, was sir John Wogan, a gentleman high in the royal favour, who had already three times filled the office of lord justice. Soon after his arrival, a parliament was held at Kilkenny, of which the enactments are still preserved;‖ and among them are some directed against the gross exactions and general misconduct of the nobility.

Still farther to embroil and complicate those scenes of strife of which Ireland was now the theatre, each of the two contending parties became divided into fierce factions within itself; and the brief pauses between their conflicts with each other were filled up with equally rancorous strife among themselves. In this year, Richard, earl of Ulster, leading a force into Thomond, attacked the castle built at Bunratty by the earl Thomas de Clare;¶ but, being encountered by the lord Richard de Clare, sustained a signal defeat; himself and his brother, lord William, were made prisoners, and John de Lacy and several others of his followers slain. In the mean while, the native septs were no less active in civil dissension than their foreign masters; but, to their shame, the weapon of the assassin was often substituted by them for the sword of civilized warfare. In this base spirit, Donogh O'Brian, a descendant of their ancient princes, was murdered in Thomond by some of his own people; and John Mac O'Hedan fell in like manner, by the hand of a brother chieftain, Manmoy.** A. D. 1311.

To the English, a feud that now sprung up among themselves, was nearly productive of serious mischief. The Byrnes and O'Tools, the hardy septs of the mountains of Wicklow, having risen, this year, in great force, had attacked the towns of Tassagard†† and Rathcoole, and, advancing to the woods of Glendalory, from thence menaced Dublin.‡‡ Instead of being able to repress and punish this audacious movement, the lord justice, sir

* Walsingham.

† The king's *locum-tenens*, as he is styled in the instrument of his appointment.—Rymer, tom. iii. 92.

‡ Annal. Hibern.

§ Annal. Hibern. "Heretofore every person dubbed a knight had a power to dub others. . . . . Thus we read in Clyn's Annals, that, ann. 1341, the earl of Desmond made Richard Archdekine a knight in Desmond, and on the same day the new knight made three others knights."—Ware, *Antiq. of Ireland*, chap. 26. It appears from Selden that the same practice prevailed in other parts of Europe in this age.—*Titles of Honour*.

‖ Bolton's Irish Statutes.

¶ This lord, whose achievements in Thomond have already been mentioned, was slain in a battle fought by him with one of the O'Brians, in the year 1287.—*Annals of Inisfallen*.

** Annal. Hibern.

†† Now called Taggard.

‡‡ Cox.

John Wogan, found himself compelled to march into Orgiel, with whatever troops he could hastily collect, for the purpose of repressing a revolt headed by sir Robert
A. D. 1312. Verdon; and so powerful was the aid given to this outbreak by other English malcontents, that, in the engagement which ensued, the force of the lord justice was defeated, and sir Nicholas Avenell, Patrick de Roche, and others of his officers were slain.* Such was the difficult and responsible task, between the Irish enemy on one side and the factious English on the other, which the harassed and sleepless government of that kingdom was called upon constantly to perform.

A few years before the period we have now entered upon, negotiations had taken place between Edward and the Scottish king, in which De Burgh, earl of Ulster, was one of the commissioners on the part of England. A truce then made between the two parties, was, shortly after, through the impatience of both, violated; and a war, memorable for ever in the annals of victorious Scotland, was the immediate
A. D. 1309. result. Aroused from the torpor that had hitherto hung over him, the English monarch collected forces from all quarters, as well mercenaries as vassals; ordered levies of infantry to be made in the marches of Wales and the nothern countries of England; and, also, by a mandate addressed to the principal Irish chieftains, invited their prompt and strenuous aid.† But to this call on the heirs of Ireland's ancient kings, no voice of loyal obedience seems to have responded. Even the slight feudal link, by which king John had attached those dynasts to the English crown, was now evidently broken asunder; and it is clear, from the terms of the writ of military service, that not one of the chiefs summoned had ever sworn fealty to Edward.

The nature of the policy, indeed, pursued by every successive chief governor,—or rather by those rulers of both government and people, the proud and rapacious Anglo-Irish lords,—had been such as to make of the nation they ruled over, not subjects, but bitter and confirmed foes. Aware that the restraints of legal forms would stand in the way of their own unprincipled projects, they refused to the natives all that was protective in the law, while employing against them all its worst contrivances of mischief. To what an extent, at this time, had been carried the wanton exactions of the great English lords, may be gathered from a tardy but significant notice of their rapacity which occurs in the proceed-
A. D. 1309. ings of a parliament held at the beginning of this reign; and, it needs only to be mentioned as a sample of the spirit in which these legislators dealt with the "Irish enemy,"—for so they called, and took pains to make, the great bulk of the population,—that the murder of an Irishman was not held to be a crime punishable by law;‡ and that even the violator of female chastity, if his victim was proved to be an Irishwoman, incurred no legal punishment.§

That a nation thus treated should writhe impatiently under the yoke, and greet with eagerness the faintest prospect of deliverance, was but in the natural course of manly and patriotic feeling; and the noble stand made by the Scots for their national independence had shot a feeling of hope and sympathy through every Irish heart. Besides those motives, arising far less from views of policy than from natural and deep-seated revenge, which would have interested them in the success of any nation armed against the English, there was also, to enlist their good wishes peculiarly in the cause of the Scots, the sympathy of a kindred people, a common lineage and language, and the similarity, still preserved, of their old national institutions. In the fortunes of Bruce a lively interest appears to have been taken by the Irish, at a time when his great and glorious work was as yet out in its first stages of accomplishment. In the year 1306, when forced to fly, soon after his coronation, it was in a small island, called Rachlin, a few miles off the north coast of Antrim, that he found a safe place of refuge, and remained concealed during the winter.

On his first arrival there, the simple islanders, unaccustomed to the sight of armed men, fled to their places of defence, with their families and cattle; but, being treated by Bruce with kindness, they submitted to him as their lord, and agreed to furnish him daily with food for 300 men. Here he remained till the approach of spring, when, having

* Annal. Hibern.

† Rymer, c. iii. p. 180. The names of thirty-five Irish chiefs are annexed to this summons.

‡ In proof of this exclusion of the mere Irish from the protection of the law, we need only refer to the record cited by Davies (4 Ed. II.) where the murderer avows his commission of the act, but pleads that his victim was an Irishman. "Bene Cognovit quod prædictum Johannem interfecit; dicit tamen quod per ejus interfectionem felonium committere non notuit, quia dicit quod prædictus Johannes fuit purus Hibernicus."

§ This enormity belongs properly to the preceding reign. See the case referred to by Lynch (Chief Remem. Roll. Dub. 6 & 7 Ed. I.) wherein Robert de la Roch and Adam le Waleys were indicted for an offence of this description against Margery O'Rorke; but it being found that "the aforesaid Margery was an Irishwoman" (quod prædicta Margeria est Hibernica,) the aggressors Robert and Adam, were acquitted.

received some aid from friends in the north of Ireland, he set sail, with a fleet of thirty-three galleys and about 300 men, and proceeded on that course of chivalrous conquest which led to the establishment of his country's independence and his own deathless renown. Besides the small force he had brought with him, his brothers, Thomas and Alexander had collected for him, in the north of Ireland, a body of 700 men, with which they passed over to Loch Ryan in Galloway.* Being attacked, however, in endeavouring to land, by Duncan M'Dowal, a powerful chieftain of that country, the greater number of them were put to the sword, or lost in the sea; and among the slain were found, with their heads cut off, the bodies of two Irish princes.†

The strong interest then felt in the fortunes of the heroic Bruce became elevated, of course, into enthusiasm when full success crowned his generous struggle; and the glorious victory of Bannockburn, in ridding Scotland of the English yoke, opened A. D. 1314. a vista, also, of hope to the future fortunes of oppressed Ireland. There appeared, at last, a dawning chance of her deliverance from bondage. The proud race who had trodden down her princes and nobles, were now, themselves, not only humiliated, but unmanned, insomuch that, as an historian of the following age expresses it, "a hundred Englishmen would take flight at the sight of two or three Scots."‡

While actively following up his victory, Bruce was waited upon by deputies from the Irish, placing themselves, and all that belonged to them, entirely at his disposal, and praying that, if he, himself, could not be spared from his royal duties, he would send them his brother Edward to be their king; nor suffer, as they said, a kindred nation to pine in bondage beneath the proud and inexorable tyranny of the English. Besides the accession of power and territory which the possession of so fine a country would afford him, Bruce saw in the proposed enterprise a ready vent for the restless ambition of his brother, who had become impatient of inferiority, even to the Bruce himself, and already laid claim to an equal share with him in the government of the Scottish realm.§ Robert appears, however, to have fully appreciated the danger and difficulty of the undertaking, as some time elapsed before he adopted any serious steps towards its accomplishment; and a few attempts by his people, in boats, on the coast of Ulster, had all been vigorously repulsed.

In the mean while, sir Theobald de Vernon was appointed lord justice of Ireland; and the aspect of affairs being such as to call for more than ordinary consideration, John de Hothum, a clergyman high in Edward's confidence, was sent over to treat and consult with the earl of Ulster, and other great lords and officers, on matters relating to the interests of the king and his realm of Ireland.‖ De Hothum was the bearer, also, of writs, or letters of credence, to the different noblemen specified, ordering them to appoint a fit and competent deputy for the government of Ireland, during the lord justice's absence, and likewise to repair, all of them, personally, to the parliament at Westminster,¶ to confer with the king and his prelates and nobles concerning the state and peaceful settlement of that realm.

Early in the spring, 1315, sir Edmund Butler, who had, in the interim, been made lord justice, returned; and, on the 25th of May, Edward Bruce, with a fleet of 300 sail, appeared off the north coast of Antrim, and landed, at Larne, an army of 6000 men.** Being joined by immense numbers of the Irish, their united force overran, with scarcely any resistance, the whole earldom of Ulster; striking terror by the havoc and ruin that marked every step of their course. Whether taken by surprise, or, A. D. 1315. as it is said, distracted by personal feuds, the English lords made no adequate effort to meet this tumultuary onset; and the earl of Ulster, whose stake in the struggle was such as to stimulate even his declining energies, appears to have been the only lord who came forward promptly to face the danger, on its first burst. The town of Dundalk was stormed by the invaders, and burnt down; and the church of the Carmelite friary, in Ardee, filled with men, women, and children, was savagely set fire to, and all within it consumed.††

* Tytler, *Hist. of Scotland.*

† "Sed hos præcipuos de interfectis in prælio obtulit domino regi, videlicit Malcolmi M'Kail, domini de Kenter, caput, et duorum regulorum Hibernensium capita," &c — *Matthew of Westminster*, p. 458.

‡ "Nempe tunc Anglis in tantum consueta adempta fuit audacia, ut a facie duorum vel trium Scotorum fugerent Angli centum."—Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*

§ Tytler, *Hist of Scotland.*—"Iste Edwards erat homo ferox, et magni cordis valde, nec votuit cohabitare fratri suo in pace, nisi dimidium regne solus haberet; et hac de causa mota fuit guerra in Hibernia."—*Fordun.*

‖ Close Roll, 8 Ed. II. See also Rymer, for the full powers entrusted to Hothum;—"plenam committimus potentiam."

¶ "Not as members of parliament," says Prynne, "but only as commissioners or treaters."

** Annal. Hibern. The names of the leaders of this expedition may be found enumerated by Barbour, and in Camden's *Annals.*

†† Holinshed.—Annal. Hibern.

Summoning his vassals to attend him at Roscommon, De Burgh marched from thence to Athlone, where he was joined by Feidlim O'Connor, the prince of Connaught, with his provincial troops. As this is the only great native lord who is mentioned as adhering—and even in his case, but temporarily—to the side of the English,* it may be concluded that most, if not all, of the other chiefs enumerated in the king's writ, had joined the standard of the invader. With no other support than the troops of Feidlim, (the lord justice having withdrawn to Dublin,) De Burgh marched in pursuit of the invaders. He had even refused, we are told, the proffered aid of the lord justice—saying to him haughtily, "You may return home: I and my vassals will overcome the Scots."† In the mean time, Bruce, while at Dundalk, had caused himself to be crowned king of Ireland;‡ and then, after overrunning the countries of Down, Armagh, Louth, and Meath, returned again to the north of Ulster, where, taking up a post in the neighbourhood of the river Banne, he resolved to await supplies from his own country. Here De Burgh came up with the Scottish forces, and making a vigorous attack upon them, was, after a stubborn conflict, defeated, with the loss of a great number of his followers slain, and of his brother William,§ sir John Mandeville, and sir Alan Fitz-Alan, taken prisoners.‖ But Bruce had also suffered much loss; and the small force with which he had landed being now reduced in numbers and strength by the harassing service in which they had been engaged, he despatched the earl of Moray¶ into Scotland, for fresh succours.

The part taken by the prince of Connaught, in lending his aid to the English arms,** could not fail to draw down odium upon him, not only his own sept and province, but among his fellow countrymen in general; and the favourable opening afforded by this feeling for an attempt to supplant him in the sovereignty of Connaught, was quickly perceived, and as quickly acted upon, by his near kinsman, Roderic O'Connor,††—a worthy branch of that Royal house, whose domestic discords and crimes have furnished the history of their doomed country with some of its darkest pages. Taking advantage of Feidlim's absence, this bold pretender, with the aid of the faction he had secured, made himself master of the Irish district of Connaught, compelling most of the septs to acknowledge his dominion, and give hostages for their future attachment and faith.

To punish and expel this daring usurper was now the most urgent object of the rightful prince; and, whatsoever were his means of raising an adequate force,—for his friends, the English, were themselves too weak to assist him, his followers, it appears were still sufficiently strong, both in numbers and loyalty, to enable him to take the field; and a great battle, fought between him and Roderic, ended in the death of that usurper, and the complete discomfiture of his force. Whether the defection of his own people had let in new light on Feidlim's mind, or a closer experience of the English, as allies, had inspired him with dread of them, as masters, he now, in the face of the country, renounced their alliance, and, to the great joy of his brother chieftains, throughout all Ireland declared for Bruce and the Scots.

This step of Feidlim, to which, in most times and histories, we could point out parallels, was such as his contemporaries, according to the party which they had themselves espoused, would pronounce either noble and patriotic, or treacherous and base.

Mean while, the Scottish leader, following up boldly his late victory, laid siege to the stronghold of Carrickfergus; while the Irish, rising in arms throughout Ulster and Munster, burnt, in the course of their wild ravages, the castles of Randown and Athlone; and, at the same time, three other castles, in Connaught, belonging to the earl of Ulster, were destroyed by a chief of that province, Cathal Ruadh O'Connor.‡‡

The increasing spread of the spirit of revolt, infecting some even among the English

* Book of Clonmacnoise.

† Dalrymple, *Annals of Scotland.*

‡ This ceremony, according to Lodge, took place at Knocknemelan, within half a mile of Dundalk.

§ Sir William de Burgh, called *Lyegh* or the *Grey*. He was on this occasion, carried into Scotland, where, leaving his sons William and Edward hostages, he gained his liberty and returned to Ireland.—*Lodge.*

‖ The stratagem that led to this victory on the part of the Scots, is thus described by Dalrymple:—"The English, ignorant of the motions of an enemy whom they despised, advanced to the attack. The Scots, by the council of sir Philip Mowbray, left their banners flying in the camp, and having made a circuit, suddenly assaulted the flank of the English army."—*Memoirs of Scotland.* He adds, in a note, "If I mistake not, this simple stratagem has been successfully employed in late wars."

¶ Thomas Randolph, Earl of Murray, or Moray, who commanded the left wing of the Scottish army at Bannockburn.

** The readiness with which Feidlim O'Connor co-operated with the English forces against Bruce, is one of the many proofs which history and our records furnish of the early and continued inclination of the Irish to be obedient to the laws and government of England, unless when perverted by the rulers in Dublin, and the interested settlers throughout the land by whom the persecuted natives were constantly goaded into rebellion."—Hardiman's *History of Galway.*

†† Book of Clonmacnoise.

‡‡ Annal. Hibern.

themselves, appeared to the government to warrant the demand of some public pledge of allegiance from those on whose loyalty the safety and maintenance of the king's government depended; and a declaration was accordingly framed, wherein, after A. D. 1315. stating that "the Scottish enemies had drawn over to them all the Irish of Ireland, several of the great lords, and many English people," the subscribers pledged themselves to maintain loyally the rights of the king against all persons whatsoever.*

Bruce himself, having left some troops to carry on the siege of Carrickfergus,† marched his army into Meath; and being encountered there by an English force under the lord justice, Roger Mortimer, put them to rout with great slaughter, owing his success to the treacherous conduct of the De Lacys. Keeping his Christmas at a place called Loughsudy, which he set fire to, we are told, on leaving it, he pushed rapidly on into Kildare; until arriving in the neighbourhood of the Moate of Ascul, he found himself encountered by the lord justice Butler, who, together with the lord John Fitz-Thomas, the lord Arnold Poer, and other lords and gentlemen of Leinster and Munster, had marched with a force to meet him. After a short skirmish, however, the English army, owing to some feuds and misunderstandings among its leaders, took suddenly to flight, and abandoned the field to the Scots, having lost in the action sir William Prendergast, knight, and a "right valiant esquire," Hamon le Gras.‡ On the Scottish side were killed Fergus of Androssan, and sir Walter Moray, with several other officers and knights, who were all buried in the church of the Friars Preachers, at Athy.

Encouraged by these evidences of weakness and discord in the English camp, the people of Munster and Leinster rose in open rebellion, and the Byrnes, O'Tooles, and O'Moores burnt the country from Arklaw to Ley. But the lord justice, issuing out upon them checked their depredations, and returned, with four-score heads, as a trophy of his triumph, to Dublin.§

Towards the beginning of the year 1316, the forces of both parties were early in the field; but the Scots, after a few adventurous efforts, were compelled, from want of provisions, to return into Ulster. There, taking possession of Northburg Castle, they sat down quietly in their quarters, and Bruce kept his court, and took cognizance of all pleas, as composedly as if it were in times of profound peace. The forces of the English, mean while, were furnished with sufficient employment nearer home by the O'Byrnes, O'Tooles, and others of the mountain septs of Wicklow, who continued daily to infest the neighbourhood of Dublin, having already laid waste both the town and country of Wicklow. The lord justice, therefore, finding his army too much enfeebled to enable him to cope with these marauders, and detach, at the same time, a sufficient force against the Scots, applied his concentrated means to the former object, and with so much success, that these mountain bandits were, for the time, entirely subdued.

Nor were the Scots, mean while, lost sight of;—a small body of troops, under the lord Thomas Mandeville, having been appointed to hover round and watch their movements. In the course of his performance of this service, occasional skirmishes took place between him and the enemy, in one of which he and his party slew thirty Scots; and, in another, this gallant lord was himself slain. The arrival of supplies to Bruce, from Scotland, in the spring of the year 1316, gave a new impulse to this frightful conflict; and the various horrors of massacre, burning, and waste, which had been suspended during the late temporary lull, were all now freshly renewed.

To reward the conduct of those lords who had stood firmly by the English government, through this crisis, was a measure called for as well by policy as by A. D. 1316. gratitude; and with this view, the dignity of earl of Carrick was bestowed upon the lord justice Butler, and John Fitz-Thomas, baron of Offaley, was created earl of Kildare.‖

* Rymer, tom. iii. At the head of the subscribers to this Letter of Allegiance from the *Magnates Hiberniæ*, stands the name of John Fitz-Thomas of Offaley, the first earl of Kildare.

† There are some details respecting this siege, not apparently much to be relied upon, which the reader may find on referring to Barbour's *Metrical Life of Robert Bruce.*

‡ In some verses of considerable merit, suggested by a visit to Jerpoint Abbey (see *Memoirs of the Family of Grace,*) a tribute to the memory of this young hero may be found.

"On Ascul's plain was heard the sound of wo,
And, as the gentle Barrow glided by,
All blood-tinged were its waters in their flow,
Where heroes died—but not for victory,—
There Hamon flourished in his flower of days," &c.

In a note on these lines, Hamon le Gras is stated to have been the commander of the force opposed to Bruce at Ascul; but no authority that I have seen warrants this assertion.

§ Annal. Hibern.

‖ There occurs a difficulty at this step, in the pedigree of the earls of Kildare, for which the reader may consult Lodge; and likewise Lynch's *View of the Legal Institutions, &c.*, p. 235. Selden, in his *Titles of Honour*, declares that Kildare's patent is "the ancientest form of creation he had seen."

The De Burghs and Geraldines, who, even at this trying juncture, had been unable to adjourn their hereditary feud, now consented to a temporary truce; and there appeared, among all, a firm and loyal resolution to set themselves manfully to the defence of the realm.

They were soon furnished, too, with a favourable opportunity of encountering, in a pitched battle, the now favourite champion of the Irish cause, Feidlim O'Connor, who had fully atoned for his former desertion of the national banner, by a series of bold and successful irruptions into the English territory; in the course of which, many of the most gallant knights, and among others, lord Stephen de Exeter and William Prendergast, were cut off by the sword. Encouraged by this success, and the applauding voice of his fellow countrymen, to try a more extended scale of military operations, the Connaught chief now took the field, with a large force; and, having been threatened with an incursion into his territory by William de Burgh, assisted by Richard de Bermingham, boldly marched forth to meet them.

It was near Athenry, in the county of Galway, that the two armies encountered each other; and the great battle that then ensued was, according to Irish writers, the most bloody and decisive that had ever been fought from the time of the first English invasion. This mighty struggle ended in the total defeat of the Irish, of whom not less than 11,000, it is said, fell on the field; the gallant young Feidlim, himself, being among the slain,* together with O'Kelly, chief of Hymaine,† and a number of other great lords and captains of Connaught and Meath. The achievement performed in the course of this battle, by one Hussey, a butcher of Athenry, who, finding himself alone, at the mercy of three assailants, encountered and slew them all, is much dwelt upon by the chroniclers, who add that, Hussey having been, for his bravery, dubbed a knight, his family became afterwards barons of Galtrim. Among other traditions connected with this great victory, which gave a final blow to the power of the O'Connors,‡ it is said that the walls of the town of Athenry were built from the spoils gained by that battle.

There had now elapsed more than a year, since the landing of Edward Bruce in Ireland; and, though his arms had been hitherto invariably victorious, no definite object had yet been gained by the enterprise. In this state of the war, his illustrious brother, king Robert, determined, generously, to come in person to his aid. Such was the confusion, indeed, then reigning in the councils of England, where the king and his barons were all but at war on the subject of the Ordinances, that Bruce had little to apprehend from that quarter during his absence. Entrusting the government, therefore, to his son-in-law, the steward, and sir James Douglas, he passed over to the aid of the new king of Ireland, with a considerable body of troops.§

The brave garrison of Carrickfergus, who had, through so many months of privation and suffering, maintained, unshrinkingly, their post, were now reduced to such extremities as to be compelled to eat the hides of beasts, and even to feed upon the dead bodies of eight Scots whom they had made prisoners. In this dreadful state, they at length surrendered to the two brother kings, on the condition, only, that the lives of the garrison soldiers should be spared.

We have seen that to the backwardness or treachery of the De Lacys was attributed the failure of the first efforts against the Scots. In a parliament, held soon after by the lord justice, Walter de Lacy was declared to be absolved from the charge; but, as an impression still prevailed that this powerful family were leagued secretly with the Scots, they deemed it prudent, in the month of December, this year, to go through the forms of an indictment and acquittal, on the charge;‖ and, receiving a charter of pardon from the king, they renewed their oath of fealty, and sealed it solemnly by the sacramental rite.

The two great parties engaged in this general warfare now strained every effort to put forth their utmost strength. Towards the end of the year 1316, the English had gained some important advantages over the natives. A second victory achieved in Connaught by William de Burgh and Sir John Bermingham, was attended with a loss, to the Irish, of 500 of their best troops, together with their captains, O'Connor and Mac Kelly; and, in the following month, John Loggan and Hugh Bisset put to rout the Scottish force, in Ulster, slaying, says the chronicler, 100 men in double armour, and 200 in single

* In this battle fell Felim O'Connor, from whom the Irish had expected more than from any other Gael then living."—*Annals of the Four Masters.* According to these annals this prince was then twenty-two years of age.

† "A territory in the county of Galway, bordering on the county of Roscommon, and at times extended by conquest into it, usually called Mainech."—Ware, *Antiq.*

‡ Hardiman, *Hist. of Galway.*

§ Tytler, *Hist. of Scotland.*"—"A flying report spread up and down Dublin, that the lord Robert Bruce, king of Scotland, was now landed in Ireland to assist his brother Edward."—*Annal. Hibern.*

‖ Annal. Hibern.

armour, besides a great number of their naked followers. Among the prisoners taken at this battle and sent to Dublin, were sir Alan Stewart and sir John Sandale.

On the side of the Scots, meanwhile, no exertion of labour or zeal was wanting to bring into the field an army strong enough to ensure a triumphant result, and thereby signalize, in a manner worthy of him, the presence of their hero, Bruce, in Ireland.* Having collected together a force, computed at 20,000 men, independent of the tumultuary army of the northern Irish, they marched as far as Slane, laying waste and burning all in their way; and from thence to Castleknock, in the neighbourhood of Dublin, where, taking Hugh Tyrrel, the lord of that castle, prisoner, they established there their quarters.† During the encampment of Bruce at this place, the earl of Ulster, who had been living retired in St. Mary's Abbey, near Dublin, was in consequence of information that he had been instrumental in bringing the Scots to Ireland, suddenly arrested by Robert de Nottingham, mayor of the city, and committed to prison in Dublin Castle.‡ The suspicion of a secret understanding between him and the Bruces, might possibly have had no other foundation than the near connexion between the two families: Robert Bruce having, in the year 1302, married Ellen, one of the daughters of this earl.§ An attempt, on the part of De Burgh, to make resistance, gave rise to a fray, in which seven of his servants were killed; while the abbey of St. Mary was pillaged and partly burnt down, owing to a suspicion that the monks favoured the enemy.‖

The citizens of Dublin, on finding themselves menaced with a siege, declared their resolution to defend, obstinately, the city, and gave, at the same time, a proof of their readiness to make every sacrifice for this object by setting fire at once to the suburbs; though, in this operation, many of the churches were destroyed, and even the venerable fane of St. Patrick did not entirely escape. To the intrepidity, indeed, and decisive conduct of the citizens of Dublin, at this crisis, the very existence of the Irish government was mainly indebted for its preservation.¶ On being informed of this spirit of the inhabitants, and learning, also, that the city was well walled, the Scottish leader deemed it most prudent not to risk the delay or failure of a seige; but, under the guidance of Walter de Lacy, who, in shameless defiance of his late oath, had become the adviser and conductor of the invading army, he turned off with his forces towards Naas, and rested for a short time at Leixlip on his way ;** nor is it a slight addition to the interest of that romantic spot to be able to fancy that the heroic Bruce, surrounded by his companions in arms, had once stood beside its beautiful waterfall, and wandered, perhaps, through its green glen.

Passing from Naas into the county of Kilkenny,†† and from thence wasting the whole country as far as Limerick, the Scots, after spreading around them misery and desolation, were brought at length to feel the extremities of famine themselves; and while numbers of them perished from hunger, the remainder had no other resource than the flesh of horses for food.‡‡ What motive could have led the two brothers, more especially at so inclement a season, to venture on a march of such length and peril, it is by no means easy to divine. If they sought, by this movement, to establish themselves at Limerick as a sort of central position between Munster and Connaught, which might enable them to attract to their banner the chieftains of both those provinces,§§ the scheme, though plausible, appears to have been hazarded merely on speculation, and to have entirely

* See, for an account of the great Scottish officers who accompanied the Bruces to Ireland, a poem by the Rev. Dr. Drummond, entitled, "Bruses Invasion;" in which the scanty materials furnished to the poet by this short episode in our history are turned to account with much skill and success.

† Annal. Hibern.—Holinshed. ‡ Harris, *Hist. of the City of Dublin.*

§ Lodge.—According to other authorities, a sister of the earl. ‖ Harris.

¶ See, in Prynne (*Animad.* p. 60.,) the writ issued, on this occasion by the king (Close Roll, 11 E. II.) granting immunity to the mayor and citizens for having set fire to the suburbs of Dublin: "Nos advertentes (says the writ) quod ea quæ urgenti necessitate guerræ fiunt pœnis legis communis pœnis subesse non debent, vobis mandamus." &c.

** "Le Brus, understanding that the city was fortified to receive him, marched towards Salmon's Leap, where Robert le Brus, king of Scotland, with Edward le Brus, the earl of Moray, the lord John Stewart, &c. encamped themselves and continued for four days."—*Annals of Ireland.*

†† "Some vestiges of Bruce's invasion yet remain. Near Aghaboe is an old fortification, vulgarly called Scotfrath, but properly Scottiswaith, or the Scot's walls or fortress."—Ledwich, *Hist. and Antiq. of Irishtown and Kilkenny.*

‡‡ "In eadem expeditione multi fame perierunt; reliqui vero carnibus equorum usi sunt."—*Fordun*, l. xii. c. 25.

§§ According to the Annals of Inisfallen, so far was the cause of the Scots from finding any favour at Limerick, that a large army, composed of English and Irish, had been collected there, for the purpose of attacking them; having chosen unanimously for their leader Murtogh O'Brian, prince of Thomond; and this force, adds the annalist, were about to march against the invaders, when, "to the great dissatisfaction and disappointment of the descendants of Brian Roe, the Scots made a precipitate retreat back into Ulster." It appears, from the same annals, that another of the O'Brians, Donough, took the part of the invaders.

failed; or if, as may seem more probable, the pressure of famine compelled them to wander to such a distance, the rapine and havoc that marked their course entirely defeated the very object they had in view, and but extended to others the scourge from which they sought to relieve themselves.

Still more unaccountable than even this vague and hazardous movement of the Scots was the total inaction, mean while, of the English leaders; who, instead of availing themselves of the weak condition to which the invaders were reduced, to strike a blow that would, at once, sweep them from the face of the land, were quietly employed in holding parliaments, both at Kilkenny and in Dublin, to consult on the state of the country, and concert measures for the expulsion of the Scots. On one of these occasions their debates lasted, we are told, for a whole week; and during all this delay, an army of no less than 30,000 men, under the command of sir Edmund Butler and the earl of Kildare,* were waiting orders to take the field.

A. D. 1317.

While thus these lords, at a moment so critical, allowed the time to elapse in such helpless indecision as can only be accounted for by the awing influence which the presence of Bruce, even under a cloud, was still able to exercise, that great man himself, with the half-famished remains of his army, had succeeded, by slow and painful marches, in effecting his retreat, at the beginning of May, into Ulster. Here, convinced, perhaps, of the hopelessness of any attempt to build up a durable dominion out of materials so rude and crumbling as the state of Ireland then afforded, Bruce committed to his more sanguine brother the farther prosecution of the war, and, taking away with him only the earl of Moray, returned to his own dominions. Among the great and good qualities of Robert Bruce, strong sense appears, as in most such leading spirits, to have been predominant; nor could he have failed, from all he had observed, to deduce an opinion respecting the Irish, which their whole succeeding history has tended to verify,—that a people whom long misrule had accustomed to be bad subjects, could never, on their own soil, make good or trustworthy soldiers;—a result which, though easily to be accounted for, is rendered, in the case of the Irish, peculiarly striking, from their acknowledged eminence in all the best soldierly qualities, when acting on other shores.

In Easter week, the new lord justice, sir Roger Mortimer, afterwards earl of March, arrived at Youghal; and active operations were about to be commenced. The welcome news, however, of the retreat of Bruce into Ulster rendered such measures unnecessary; and the immense body of volunteers which had been collected for the occasion—called by the Irish a "rising out"†—were all dismissed to their several homes.

A. D. 1317.

Thus released from the immediate pressure of the enemy's forces, the attention of the government was drawn to the case of the earl of Ulster, who was still a prisoner in the castle of Dublin, notwithstanding that a writ of mainprise had been issued for his discharge.‡ In defiance of law and authority, the mayor of Dublin still kept him confined. In a parliament, however, held at Kilmainham by the lord justice, together with the lord Wogan, sir Fulke Warren, and thirty other knights, the deliverance of the earl was taken into consideration, and, at a second meeting of the same parliament, was effected; the earl having, previously, been required to give hostages, as well as to take an oath on the sacrament, that he would neither by himself, his friends, or followers, do any injury to the citizens in revenge for his imprisonment.

Among the memorable Articles of Reform framed by the Ordainers in the fourth year of this reign, there was one to the effect that "to prevent delay in the administration of justice, parliaments should be holden, at least, once, and, if need be, oftener, every year." Following in the train of that example, a petition was addressed, this year, to the king, praying that "a parliament might be held once every year in Ireland, to redress the grievance mentioned in their petition." Attempts have been made from time to time, especially in periods of high political excitement, to misrepresent the meaning and object of these enactments for the holding of annual parliaments. But it is clear that neither by the measures adopted in England for that purpose, nor by the prayer of the Irish petition just noticed, was it at all meant that parliaments should be elected every year, but simply that the parliament should, every year, hold a session. No farther evidence, indeed, is wanting in support of this view of the question, than the known fact, that the very same parliament which confirmed the ordinance for the annual holding of parliaments, was itself continued, by prorogation, to another session.§ With respect to the

* Thomas, the second earl of Kildare.—*Lodge.*

† Cox. ‡ Holinshed.—Annal. Hibern.

§ In the words of the writ of summons, "ad *idem* parliamentum quod ibidem duximus *continuandum*."—Prynne, *Parliamentry Writs*, iv. 87.

Irish petition, we learn from a writ dated at Lincoln, in the tenth year of this reign, that the prayer contained in it for a parliament to be held annually was granted.*

Through all the calamities and reverses that now befell the national cause, the spirit of the people was chiefly sustained by the exhortations of their clergy; for it is a fact worthy of notice, that the church of the Irish and the church of the English, in that country, were at this time as widely divided by their difference in language and race as they have been at any period since, by their difference in creed. A strong proof of the sort of feeling with which the native ecclesiastics regarded all who belonged to the race of their English rulers is to be found in a regulation of the abbey of Mellifont, dated A. D. 1322, determining that no person whatsoever should be admitted into that abbey, until he had taken an oath that he was not of English descent.† They but followed, too, in this exclusive spirit, the example set them by their rulers, who strictly forbade, under severe penalties, the admission of natives into any of the religious communities established within the English bounds.

The disaffection towards the ruling powers so strongly manifested among the clergy was not confined to the native ecclesiastics, but spread, also, among their English or Anglo-Irish brethren; and Adam de Northampton, bishop of Ferns, was not only a favourer of the cause of the Bruces, but, as appears from a writ issued against him, August 6th, 1317, was accused of furnishing them with provisions, arms, and men.‡ Complaints had been made by the English monarch to pope Innocent XXII., with whom he stood high in favour, of the disloyal conduct of the Irish clergy; and a letter was addressed, accordingly by his holiness, to the archbishops of Dublin and Cashel, empowering them to admonish, and, if necessary, excommunicate, all such rebels to the English crown. The effect of this papal commission, or mandate, on the minds of the Irish, we shall have, presently, a more fit opportunity of noticing.

Throughout the remainder of this year the same chaotic confusion of public and private warfare seems to have prevailed over the whole kingdom. The untractable De Lacys, no less fierce than they were treacherous, still defied and baffled the authority of the lord justice Mortimer, who, having sent to command them to come to him, and received a refusal, then formally deputed sir Hugh Crofts to enter into treaty with them for the settlement of peace. These savage lords, however, did not scruple to murder this envoy, who was a gentleman of high repute and honour. It became, therefore, necessary to adopt strong measures; and the lord justice, taking with him an armed force, attacking the offenders in their own territory, and, driving them from thence into Connaught, laid waste their lands, slew numbers of their followers, and declared themselves, by proclamation, traitors and outlaws.

As another specimen of the sort of example held out thus early by the gentry of the Pale to the natives, it is found on record, that sir Hugh Cannon, chief justice of the court of common pleas, was, at this time, murdered on the road between Naas and Castle Martyr by one of the family of the Berminghams.

Among the Irish, mean while, the old game of discord continued to be carried on with all the usual national zest; and a quarrel, which had been for some sime kindling between two great captains, or princes, of Connaught, now led to a battle attended with the slaughter of 4000 of their respective followers. It was this discord among themselves, the inherent vice of the Irish nation, that paralyzed then, as it has done ever since, every effort for their enfranchisement, and which, at that time, would have kept them hopeless and confirmed slaves, had even a whole army of Robert Bruces thronged to their deliverance.

The natural consequences of so long a continuance of the scourge of warfare now showed themselves in a general famine throughout the country, during which the wretched people were reduced to such extremities that they took the dead, as we are told, out of their graves, and, boiling the flesh of the corpses in the sculls,§ thus frightfully appeased their hunger;—even mothers in this manner, feeding upon their own children. Following close on these harrowing details, we find an account of a splendid banquet given by the lord justice at the castle of Dublin, in the course of which he con-

* Close Roll, 10 E. II.—See Prynne, for this writ, *Animad. &c.* 361.

† Cox.—"In Abbathia Melifontis talis inolevit error, quod nullus ibi admittatur in domum predictam, nisi primitus facta fide, quod non sit de genere Anglorum."

‡ Ware's Bishops.

§ "Some of them," says the annalist in Camden, "were so pinched with famine that they dug up graves in churchyards, and after they had boiled the flesh in the scull of the dead body, eat it up."—"As if," says Dalrymple, "famine had consumed the spits and the kettles!" This absurd story (Dr. Drummond thinks) may have arisen from the ambiguity of the word "sculls;" which frequently, as used by old writers, means a covering for the head. Thus, in Baron Finglas's *Breviate of Ireland*, "Every six yeomen to take a hackney, and a lad to bear their jacks, *sculls*, bows, and arrows."

ferred knighthood upon John Mortimer, and four other of his train, and shortly after set sail for England, leaving all his debts, which amounted to 1000*l.*, unpaid; in consequence of which, says the chronicler, "many a bitter curse he carried with him to the sea." Before Mortimer's departure, he had condemned John de Lacy, who had been for some time in prison, and refused to plead to the indictment against him, to suffer the frightful punishment of being pressed to death.*

The spell of inaction that had hung, all this time, around Edward Bruce,—owing far more to the weakened condition of his army than to any effect produced by the anathemas of the pope,—was now on the point of being broken, and in a way fatal to his chivalrous enterprise and life. Alexander Bicknor, archbishop of Dublin, had just been appointed lord justice, succeeding in that office the archbishop of Cashel, William Fitz-John. An early and abundant harvest, in all those parts of the country not wholly wasted by war, enabled both of the belligerent parties to resume early their operations; and Edward Bruce, taking the field with an army amounting, as some say, to about 3000 men, marched to the Faughard, a memorable spot within two miles of Dundalk.† The other commanders of the Scottish force were Philip lord Mowbray, Walter lord de Soulis, and Alan lord Stewart, together with his three brothers. The three De Lacys, also, had joined the rebel ranks.

A. D. 1318.

The English force which had marched from Dublin to encounter this army was commanded by the lord John Bermingham, having under him a number of distinguished officers,—sir Richard Tuit, sir Miles de Verdon, John Maupas, and other Anglo-Irish barons,—and being accompanied to the field by the primate of Armagh, to perform the last offices to the dying.‡

According to the Scottish historians, Edward Bruce had, in the course of the three years during which he waged war in Ireland, encountered the English armies eighteen times, and been in every one of those successive battles victorious.§ The same authorities compute his force on the present occasion to have been little more than a tenth of that of his adversaries; while the English chroniclers, on the other hand, represent the number of their own countrymen engaged to have been not one half of that of the Scots. On whichever side, in these widely differing statements, the balance of truth may be supposed to lean, it is clear, from both accounts, that the conflict was short; that victory declared for the English on the very first onset; and, moreover, that to the desperate bravery of one man that result is mainly to be attributed. Under the persuasion that the death of Bruce himself would give victory, at once, to the English, John Maupas, a brave Anglo-Irish knight, rushed devotedly into the enemy's ranks, to accomplish that object; and when, after the battle, the body of Bruce was discovered, that of John Maupas was found laying stretched across it.‖ The amount of the slain in the respective armies has been variously stated; being made, by each party, proportionate to its own calculation of the numbers originally engaged.¶

Untaught by the generous example of Robert Bruce, who, after the victory of Bannockburn, treated with the courtesy of a true knight those whom he had conquered in the field,** the English insulted over the body of his fallen brother, and, dividing it into quarters, sent them to be exhibited all over the country; while the head, which Ber-

* Holinshed—a mode of punishment called by the law, *peine forte et dure*. The annalist in Camden, not understanding this refinement of cruelty, tells us that Lacy's punishment was "to be pinched in diet, so that he died in prison."

† "The Faughard" is an artificial mount, composed of stones and terras, with a deep trench round it, raised to the height of sixty feet, in the form of the frustrum of a cone, upon the north frontier of what is now called the English pale. There has formerly been some sort of an octagonal building on the top of it, as appears from the foundations remaining."—Wright, *Louthiana*.

‡ By Walsingham this prelate is represented as having been the captain of the English force. "Primate de Armach pro rege Anglorum capitaineo existente." § Barbour, book xii.

‖ "A pillar, in the burying ground of Faughard," says Dr. Drummond, "marks the grave of Edward Bruce. This pillar is said to have stood, within the memory of man, seven feet above the ground." He adds that "every peasant in the neighbourhood can point out the grave of king Bruce, as he is universally called."

¶ The following is Walsingham's account of the result:—Occisis baronettis de Scotia 29, in eodem campo, et 5 millibus et octingentis aliis præter millites et nobiles supradictos."

** Captivos quos caperat tam civiliter tractari fecit, tam honorifice custodiri, quod corda multorum in amorem sui indivisibiliter commutavit."—*Walsingham*. "He set at liberty," says another historian, "Ralph de Monthermar and sir Marmaduke Twenge, without ransom; and sent the dead bodies of the earl of Gloucester and lord Clifford to be interred in England with the honours due to their birth and valour." Dalrymple, *Annals of Scotland*. An instance of the chivalrous courtesy of Robert Bruce, while in Ireland, is thus related by Mr. Tytler,—"In Ireland we find the king halting the army, while retreating, in circumstances of extreme difficulty, on hearing the cries of a poor lavendere, or washerwoman, who had been seized with labour, commanding a tent to be pitched for her, and taking measures for her pursuing her journey when she was able to travel."—*Hist. of Scotland*, vol. ii.

mingham presented as a trophy, to the English king, procured for him, in return the earldom of Louth and a grant of the manor of Atherdee.*

We have seen that the pope, in consequence of the complaints made to him by Edward of the rebellious spirit manifested in Ireland, as well by the clergy as by the laity, had addressed a strong letter to the chief Irish prelates, empowering them to launch the censures of the church against all those, whether lay or ecclesiastical, who were guilty of disaffection to the ruling powers. This interposition, in aid of the views of their haughty oppressors, was felt the more keenly by the great body of the Irish chieftains, as coming from a quarter to which the ancient fame of their country for sanctity and learning might well have encouraged them to look for sympathy and support. In the warmth of this feeling, a memorable remonstrance was addressed to the pope by O'Neill, prince of Tyrone, speaking as the representative of his brother chiefs and of the whole Irish nation. "It is with difficulty," say they, "we can bring ourselves to believe that the biting and venomous calumnies with which we, and all who espouse our cause, have been invariably assailed by the English, should have found admittance, also, into the mind of your holiness, and have been regarded by you as founded in fact and truth." Lest such an impression, however, should, unluckily, have been produced, they begged to lay before him their own account of the origin and state of their nation,—"if state it could be called,"†—and of the cruel injuries inflicted upon them and their ancestors by some of the English monarchs and their unjust ministers, as well as by the English barons born in Ireland;—injuries, they add, inhumanly commenced, and still wantonly continued. It would thus be in his power, to judge of them and their rulers, and determine on which side the real grounds for complaint and resentment lay.

After this introduction, the Irish chiefs proceed to give a rapid sketch of the early history of their country; and beginning with the sons of Milesius, lay claim to a succession of kings of Ireland through no less a period than 4000 years, ending in the year 1170, when Adrian, an Englishman by birth, and still more, as they add, by affection and prejudice, delivered up a country which its own line of kings had preserved sacred from foreign dominion, through so many ages, to be the helpless prey of a horde of tyrants, far more cruel than the fangs of ravening wild beasts.‡ From that fatal moment, they allege, no device or expedient that fraud or violence, in their most odious forms, could suggest, had been left untried by the English intruders to extirpate the native race, and appropriate to themselves the sole dominion over the soil. In this design, too, they had so far succeeded, that while all the fairest portion of the island had been gradually usurped by them, the rightful proprietors were driven to the bogs and mountains, and, even there, were compelled to fight for some dreary spot upon which to exist.

The state of a country thus circumstanced, could not be otherwise, these chiefs add, than one of constant civil war; and it was, therefore, not wonderful that the crimes and miseries which are ever attendant on domestic strife,—the murder and rapine, the mean frauds, the detestible perfidies, which it engenders,—should, with both parties, have grown so habitual as to become a second nature.§ So great had been the sacrifice of human life, in this struggle, that, without counting the numbers carried off by famine, and long grievous imprisonment, no less than 50,000 on each side had fallen by the sword in the field.‖ "Alas!" they exclaim, "we have now no directing head to watch over us, to enlighten our counsels, and amend our errors."¶

The safety of their church, they bitterly complain, had been brought into peril, not merely in a worldly and temporal sense, but as regarded the eternal safety of their own souls; and while such was the extremity to which the act of the Roman pontiff had reduced them, none of those conditions on which he had granted the dominion of Ireland to Henry and his successors had been fulfilled by any of those princes. According to the bull confirming this grant, the English king had solemnly promised to enlarge the boun-

* Rymer. t. iii. p. 767.—This grant "shows (says Dalrymple) the manner in which earls were created at that time. It confers twenty pounds *per annum* upon him for his services in the battle of Dundalk, under the name of earl of Louth, and gives that earldom to him and the heirs male of his body by the service of one fourth of a knight's fee."

† "De ortu nostro et statu, si tamen status dici debeat, ac etiam de injuriis crudelibus nostris, nostrisque progenitoribus, per nonnullos reges Angliæ, eorumque ministros iniquos, et barones Anglicos in Hibernia natos, inhumaniter illatis, et continuatis adhuc."

‡ "Sicque nos privans honore regio, nostri abeque culpa, et sine rationabili causa, credelioribus omnium bestiarum dentibus tradidit lacerandos."

§ "Unde propter hæc et multa alia similia inter nos et illos implacabiles inimicitiæ et guerræ perpetuæ sunt exortæ. Ex quibus secutæ sunt occasiones mutuæ, depredationes assiduæ, rapinæ continuæ, fraudes et perfidiæ detestabiles et nimis crebræ."

‖ "Plusquam quinquaginta millia hominum à tempore quo facta est usque in præsens de utraque natione, præter consumptos fame et afflictos carcere gladio ceciderunt."

¶ "Sed, proh dolor! ex defectu capitis, omnis correctio nobis defecit et debita emenda."

daries of the Irish church, and preserve all its rights and privileges untouched and entire; to inform the people, by wholesome laws and sound moral discipline; to implant every where, throughout the land, the seeds of virtue, and eradicate those of vice; and, finally, to pay to St. Peter the stipulated pension of 1*d.* a-year from every house.

Such were the conditions of the papal grant; but the kings of England, they declare, had, in every respect, departed from them. Instead of the boundaries of the church having been enlarged, it had, on the contrary, been so much encroached upon, that some of the cathedrals had been despoiled of half their possessions; while, to such an extent was ecclesiastical liberty violated, that bishops and prelates themselves were, by the mere order of the king's ministers, cited to appear, and then arrested and cast into prison;* till, at length, from long endurance of such treatment, the spirit of the clergy had sunk into servile submission, nor could they now summon the courage to whisper, even to his holiness, the grievances and insults under which they suffered. Such being "their own unworthy silence, under such wrongs, it is not for us," add these indignant chiefs, "to utter a syllable in their behalf."

With respect to the mass of the population, whom their new rulers had pledged themselves to instruct by means of salutary laws and sound moral discipline, such was the manner, they allege, in which this promise had been carried into effect, that, by degrees, all that holy and dovelike simplicity which had once characterized the Irish nation, was transformed, by the example and society of these strangers, into low serpentine craft.† Depriving the people of their own ancient and written laws,—with the exception of a few which they would not suffer to be wrung from them,—these foreigners replaced them by others of their own dictation, conceived in the bitterest spirit of hatred towards the people for whom they legislated; and, in more than one instance, providing deliberately for their extermination.

To give some idea of the iniquity of the code under which they suffered, the writers of the remonstrance cite the following instances:—1. That no Irishman,‡ however aggrieved, could bring an action in the king's courts; though, against himself, an action might be brought by any person who was not an Irishman. 2. That if an Englishman murdered a native, however innocent and exalted in rank might be the latter, or whether he was layman or ecclesiastic, or even a bishop, no cognizance would be taken of the crime in the king's courts.§ 3. That no native woman married to an Englishman could, on his death, be admitted to the claim of dower. 4. That it was in the power of any English lord to set aside the last wills of the natives subjected to him, and dispose of their property according to his own pleasure, appropriating it all, if such was his inclination, to himself. When crime was thus sanctioned by the strict letter of the law, what a host of evils must have been let loose by its spirit!

The remonstrants add that, even by churchmen among the English, the killing of an Irishman was not regarded as a crime; and they refer to several instances of natives having been murdered with impunity; some of them, they say, under circumstances too atrocious to be easily credited. Among other proofs of the feeling of the English clergy, on this point, it is stated that a certain brother Simon, who was of the order of the friars minors, and also a near relation of the bishop of Connor, had been heard to say, but the year before, in the court and presence of Edward Bruce, that he thought it no sin to slay an Irishman; and that, if he himself were to commit such an act, he should not the less celebrate mass after it.‖

From a total dissimilarity, as they allege, between the English and themselves, not only in race and language, but in every other respect,—a dissimilarity greater, they declare, than word or pen can adequately describe,—there appeared no longer the slightest hope that they could ever live peacefully together. So great was the pride and lust of governing, on one side, and such the resolution, on the other, to cast off the intolerable yoke, that, as there never yet had been, so never, in this life, *would* there be, peace or truce between the two nations.¶ They add, that they themselves had already sent letters

* "Per ministros enim regis Angliæ in Hibernia citantur, arrestantur, capiuntur, et incarcerantur indifferenter episcopi et prælati."

† "Quod sancta et columbina ejus simplicitas, ex eorum cohabitatione et exemplo reprobo, in serpentinam calliditatem mirabiliter est mutata."

‡ "Quod omni homini non Hibernico licet super quacunque indifferenter actione convenire Hibernicum quemcunque; sed Hibernicus quilibet sive clericus sit, sive laicus, solis prælatis exceptis, ab omni repellitur actione eo ipso."

§ "Quando aliquis Anglicus perfidè et dolosè interfecit hominem Hibernicum, quantumcunque nobilem et innocentem, sive clericum, sive laicum, sive regularem, sive secularem, etiam si prælatus Hibernicus interfectus fuerit, nulla correctio vel emenda fit indicta curia de tali nefario occisore."

‖ "Quod non est peccatum hominem Hibernicum interficere, et si ipsemet istud committeret, non minus ob hoc missam celebraret."

¶ "Quod sicut nec fuit hactenus, nec unquam de cætero inter nos et illos sincera concordia esse vel fieri poterit in hac vita."

to the king and his council, through the hands of John Hothum, now bishop of Ely, representing the wrongs and outrages they had so long suffered from the English, and proposing a settlement by which all such lands as were known to be rightfully theirs should be secured, in future, to them, by direct tenure from the crown; or even agreeing in order to save the farther effusion of blood, to submit to any friendly plan proposed by the king himself, for a fair division of the lands between them and their adversaries.

To this proposition, forwarded to England two years before, no answer, they say, had been returned. "Wherefore," continue they, "let no one feel surprise if we now endeavour to work out our own deliverance, and defend, as we can, our rights and liberties against the harsh and cruel tyrants who would destroy them." In conclusion, they announce to the pope, that, for the more speedy and effectual attainment of their object (this spirited remonstrance having been addressed to his holiness before the Scottish war,) they have called to their aid the illustrious earl of Carrick, Edward de Bruce, a lord descended from the same ancestors with themselves, and have made over to him, by letters patent, all the rights which they themselves, as rightful heirs of the kingdom, respectively possess,—thereby, constituting him king and lord of Ireland.

By some of those writers, who allow the spirit of religious partisanship to infect their views, even of those periods in our history when the same creed prevailed in both islands, this memorable Remonstrance of the chiefs and gentry of Ireland has been represented as really issuing from the Irish prelates and clergy.* It is, however, manifest, that the real object of this spirited document was to denounce, and indignantly protest against, that ultramontane party, in the Irish church, which was now leagued with the Roman court in abetting the English king's projects for the subjugation of Ireland.† The impressive passage in which this servility, on the part of the church, is so bitterly branded, sufficiently sets aside the perverse notion that the native clergy took any leading share in drawing up the document.

At the commencement of this reign, the cruel persecution and spoliation to which, in consequence of their great wealth, the religious order of Knights Templars had been subjected in most parts of Europe, was also extended, though in a more mitigated shape, to England and Ireland;—the combined influence of the pope and Philip le Bel (the latter the chief author of the conspiracy) having been exerted to prevail on Edward to join in their unprincipled scheme. To what extent the order of Knights Templars had established themselves in Ireland does not very clearly appear; but the orders for their seizure and imprisonment were issued in the first year of his reign; and in the year 1308, all the Knights Templars in England and Ireland were apprehended on the same day. The process against them lasted for three years, and was conducted in Dublin with great solemnity before Richard Balbyn, minister of the order of the Dominicans, friar Philp de Slane, lecturer of the same order, and friar Hugh St. Leger. The charges brought against them appear to have been most feebly supported; but already the general voice of Europe had pronounced their condemnation, and the lands and possessions belonging to them in Ireland were bestowed upon a rival order, the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, long established at Kilmainham.‡

* See Phelan's *History of the Policy of the Church of Rome in Ireland.* This writer, however, thus eloquently does justice both to the matter and the manner of the Irish Remonstrance:—"When it urges, on their behalf, that, 'besides the sufferers by famine and disease, 50,000 of their countrymen had already suffered by the Saxon sword;' and, 'that there is no longer a spot in their native country which the arrogance of the strangers will allow them to call their own;' it makes an appeal, the truth of which is supported by our wretched annals, and the force acknowledged by human nature."

† "Here again," says Dr. O'Connor (*Columbanus ad Hibernos*, No. 2.,) "the ultra-montanes interfered; and England, being then in amity with Rome, they confederated with her and with the Roman court, against their native country."

‡ Archdall, *Monast. Hibern.* 228.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

EDWARD III.

State of Ireland on the accession of Edward III.—Dissensions among the great English families.—Irish again petition for the advantages of English law—again without success.—Massacre of English by English in Leinster and Munster.—Maurice Fitz-Thomas created earl of Desmond.—Lavish grants of Palatinates.—O'Brian takes the field in great force.—Feuds between the De Burghs and the earl of Desmond.—Severe measures of Sir Anthony Lucy.—Desmond refuses to attend Parliament—is arrested and thrown into prison.—Lord William Bermingham executed.—Announced intention of the king to visit Ireland—his real purpose an expedition against Scotland.—Murder of the young earl of Ulster—adoption of Irish laws and usages by the De Burghs and other English.—The lord of Kerry joins the Irish—is taken prisoner by the earl of Desmond.—Severe Measures against the English Born in Ireland—announced resumption of all grants and gifts made to them.—General indignation of the old English settlers.—A parliament summoned, which Desmond and other lords refuse to attend.—A convention held by these lords at Kilkenny—remonstrance addressed by them to the king.—Administration of Sir Ralph Ufford—takes summary measures against the refractory lords—his treacherous seizure of the earl of Kildare.—Ufford's death and character.—Earl of Kildare released from prison—attends the king at Calais, and is knighted for his valour—gracious conduct of Edward to him and the earl of Desmond.—Desmond appointed lord justice—his death.—Useful ordinances for Ireland.—Disqualifying Laws against the natives.—The Duke of Clarence, the king's son, made lord lieutenant—his prejudices against the English settlers—succeeds in defeating the Irish forces, and returns to England—sent over again as lord lieutenant, and holds a parliament.—The famous statute of Kilkenny—its tyrannical enactments.—Administration of Sir William Windsor—wanton acts of power committed by him.—Miscellaneous notices.

During the reigns of the first and second Edwards, the power of the English crown, in Ireland, had considerably declined. Even in its best time, the footing gained in that realm was but partial and local, and a large portion even of this limited sovereignty fell away during the reigns that followed, from the crown. The wars of Henry III. and the two succeeding princes, in France and Scotland, left no disposable force or treasure for the reduction of Ireland; and even of the portion of that kingdom already conquered, the greater part had been withdrawn from the royal jurisdiction, by those lavish grants to a few favoured individuals, beginning with the first adventurers, which had been the means of wantonly parcelling out, among nine or ten English lords, almost the whole of the kingdom.

A. D. 1327. The reign of the third Edward will be found to differ but little from those of his predecessors, in the odious picture it presents of a cruel and rapacious aristocracy let loose upon a defenceless, because divided, people. It would seem, indeed, almost incredible that, in the chivalrous days of the Edwards, there should have been found so many of high-born and warlike English noblemen to take a part in the rude and inglorious frays of Anglo-Irish warfare. But, besides the temptations so fertile a field of plunder held forth, a nearer insight into the homes and habits of the English nobility of that period might warrant the conclusion, that they themselves were still very backward in civilization;* and that, not only in the general outline, but in some of the features also of their social condition, they differed not very much from those great Irish chieftains against whom they were now employing all the worst arts of buccaneering warfare. Like the chieftain, the English baron of that day was a kind of independent potentate, regarding only the conventional law of his own class, and submitting but by force to any other; while constantly surrounded by idle and ruffianly retainers, ever

* The following is the character given by Hume, of the English baron of this period:—"The produce of his estates was consumed in rustic hospitality, by himself or his officers. A great number of idle retainers, ready for any disorder or mischief, were maintained by him: all who lived upon his estate were absolutely at his disposal. Instead of applying to courts of justice, he usually sought redress by open force and violence. The great nobility were a kind of independent potentates, who, if they submitted to any regulations at all, were less governed by the municipal law than by a rude species of the law of nations."

ready, at his bidding, for rapine and mischief, he bore, like the Irish chief, too close an affinity to the worst species of king, to be ever expected to prove, under any circumstances, a good subject.

During the administration of Thomas Fitz-John, earl of Kildare, who was the lord justice, at the commencement of this reign,* there broke out violent hostilities between Maurice Fitz-Thomas, afterwards earl of Desmond, assisted by the Butlers and Berminghams, and the lord Arnold Poer, having on his side the powerful family of the De Burghs. The cause alleged for the general quarrel which thus committed them, in battle array, against each other, only shows how combustible must have been the state of feeling which so slight an insult—for insult, we are told, it was deemed—could provoke into explosion. The lord Arnold Poer, it seems, had called Maurice Fitz-Thomas,† in derision, "a rhymer;" and hence the summons of the forces, on both sides, to the field. The consequences of the battle, to the Poers and the De Burghs, were most disastrous; great numbers of both these families were slain, while others were driven into Connaught, and their lands despoiled and ruined. In vain did the lord justice endeavour to compose this senseless strife; his efforts proved wholly unavailing. The unlucky aggressor, Arnold Poer, fled into England,—leaving the field to the triumphant Butlers and their confederates, who, after having wreaked their vengeance by laying waste his lands, were proceeding to extend their ravages still farther, when at length the government, taking alarm, strengthened the guards of the cities and towns, and made preparations for their defence. Mandates were issued also by the king, on hearing of the rebellious spirit manifested by these barons, in which, expressing his surprise and displeasure at the accounts that had reached him, he enjoined the immediate submission of both parties to his representative, the lord justice.‡ A. D. 1328.

Before the arrival, however, of this mandate, the confederates themselves had already adopted the course it enjoined, and, despatching an envoy to the justiciary, had assured him they meant no injury to the king or his cities, but had assembled solely for the purpose of avenging themselves on their enemies. They now added, that they were ready to make their appearance before him at Kilkenny, and there defend themselves against the charge.§ Accordingly they met, in that city, the lord justice and the king's council, and humbly sued for a charter of pardon or peace; but their offence having been much too serious to admit of such easy remission, farther time was taken by the council for the consideration of their suit.

Mean while, the Irish of Leinster, taking advantage, in their turn, of the dissensions of their rulers, had set up Donald Mac Art Mac Morrough, a descendant of the ancient princes of that province, to be their king and general; and, making an irruption into the English settlement, advanced with a numerous force within two miles of Dublin; where, being attacked by sir Henry Traherne, they were all put to rout, and their chief, Mac Morrough, himself, made prisoner. The English general consented, for the sum of 200*l.*, to spare this chieftain's life; and he was, soon after, enabled to escape from the castle of Dublin, through the help of another Englishman, Adam Nangle, who conveyed to him a rope for that purpose. This kindness, however, proved fatal to Nangle himself; for he was tried for the act, and executed.‖

On the death of the earl of Kildare, the second of that title, at Maynooth,¶ Roger Outlaw, prior of Kilmainham, and also lord chancellor of Ireland, was appointed to the office of lord justice. In the same year, James Butler, second earl of Carrick, was created earl of Ormond,** having, at the same time, granted to him the regalities, liberties, knights' fees, and other royal privileges of the county of Tipperary, with all the rights of a palatine in that county, for life. During the administration of Roger Outlaw, the lords Arnold Poer and William de Burgh having returned into Ireland, the principal leaders of the late disgraceful baronial feuds were induced, through the interposition of the lord justice, to consent to terms of peace; and between the Poers and De Burghs on one side, and the Butlers, Geraldines, and Berminghams on the other, a reconciliation was happily effected, in celebration of which the earl of Ulster gave a great feast in the castle of Dublin; and, on the following day, the lord Maurice Fitz-Thomas commemorated the event by a similar banquet in St. Patrick's church; though, as the chronicler, somewhat scandalized, remarks, it was then the holy season of Lent.†† A. D. 1328. A. D. 1329.

* See Rymer, tom. iv. 295., for a writ addressed to the earl of Kildare, at this time, concerning the custody of the castles near the marches.
† Annal. Hibern.
‡ Rymer, iv. 356.
§ Annal. Hibern.
‖ Ibid.
¶ Lodge.
** Carte, *Introduct.*
†† Annal. Hibern.

Though so frequently repulsed in their efforts to obtain the protection of English law, the natives again, in the second year of this monarch's reign, preferred a petition to the crown, praying that the Irish might be permitted to use the law of England without being obliged to purchase charters of denization to qualify them for that privilege.* The writ of the king recommending this prayer to the "unprejudiced" attention of the lord justice differs little in phrase or tone from those of his predecessors on the same point; nor is any thing more said of the petition or its significant prayer, during the remainder of this king's reign.

A. D. 1329. Under the government of sir John Darcy new insurrections broke forth in the provinces of the south; and while Mac Geoghegan took the field at the head of his followers in Westmeath, O'Brian of Thomond held forth the signal of insurrection to the septs of Munster. At this critical juncture, the infatuated English were employed in murdering each other; and a treacherous massacre which took place in Orgiel, exhibited the frightful spectacle of not less than 160 Englishmen, among whom were the earl of Louth, Talbot of Malahide, and many more gentlemen of rank, lying basely butchered by their own countrymen, the Gernons, Savages, and others. Almost at the same, time the Barrys, Roches, and other English in Munster, were guilty of a no less atrocious and sweeping act of carnage upon the lord Philip Bodnet, Hugh Condon, and about 140 of their followers, all of whom were, at one fierce swoop, made victims to the factious rage and perfidious cruelty of their own countrymen.

It was, assuredly, but just retribution that, in the fair and open field of fight, the curse of defeat should light upon the arms of those who had dishonoured the name of soldier by such base and craven cruelty; and, in every direction, discomfiture and disaster appear to have attended the course of the English troops. The force marched by lord Thomas Butler into West Meath was put to rout near Mullingar, with considerable loss, by the chief, Mac Geoghegan. Sir Simon Genevil, in like manner, suffered a signal defeat at Carbery, in the county of Kildare; while Brian O'Brian ravaged, at will, over the whole country, and, among other achievements, burnt down the towns of Athassel and Tipperary.

A. D. 1330. Unable to cope with so general a spirit of insurrection, the lord justice saw that he was left no other resource than to call in the aid of that powerful and popular nobleman, Maurice Fitz-Thomas, who had a few months before† been created earl of Desmond, with a grant, at the same time, of all the regalities, liberties, and other royal privileges of the county of Kerry.‡

Thus were two more powerful seignories added to the many already created, empowering a proud and upstart oligarchy to domineer over the whole land. The distracting oppression, indeed, of petty kingship under which the country, in its old, independent state, groaned, was now but replaced by a form of toparchy still more insulting and odious, inasmuch as the multifold scourge had passed from the hands of natives into those of aliens and intruders. The palatinate now granted to Desmond formed the ninth of those petty sovereignties into which the kingdom had been wantonly parcelled in order to enrich and exalt a few favoured individuals, not more to the injury of the people than to the usurpation and abuse of the prerogatives of the crown.§ For, in fact, these palatine lords had royal jurisdiction throughout their territories; made barons and knights, and erected courts for civil and criminal causes, as well as for the management of their own revenues, according to the forms in which the king's courts were established in Dublin.‖ They made their own judges, sheriffs, and coroners; nor did the king's writ run in the palatinates, though they comprised more than two parts of the English colonies.¶

In compliance with the desire of the government, and under a promise from them of king's pay, Desmond, at the head of nearly 10,000 men, having the O'Brians for his allies, took the field against the combined septs of Leinster, the O'Nolans, O'Mor-

* Prynne, 266. † Lodge.

‡ With the exception, as usual, of the four pleas thus particularized in the words of the patent: "Quatuor placitis, videlicet, *incendio, raptu, forestal', et thesauro invento*, ac etiam *proficuo de croceis*,' duntaxat exceptis."

§ "Of this sort are the grants of counties palatine in Ireland, which though at first were granted upon good consideration when they were first conquered, for that those lands lay then as a very border to the wild Irish, subject to continual invasion, so as it was needful to give them great privileges for the defence of the inhabitants thereof; yet now that it is no more a border, nor frontiered with enemies, why should such a privilege be any longer continued?"—Spenser, *View of the State of Ireland.*

‖ Davies.—According to Lynch, the jurisdiction of the Irish seignories was not quite so extensive as it is represented by sir John Davies. "It is not easy (he says) to determine precisely the jurisdiction belonging to palatinates, or 'contes paleis,' but if it was thought that in Ireland there at any time existed such a palatinate as that of Chester, where a subject created his own barons, held his own parliament, &c., such an opinion will prove wholly untenable."—*View of the Legal Institutions*, &c.

¶ Ibid.

roughs, and O'Dempsys; and laying waste all their lands, compelled them to submit and give hostages, having retaken the castle of Ley from the O'Dempsys. The funds of the government being found insufficient to defray the expenses of this war, or discharge the king's pay promised to Desmond, that lord had recourse, for the subsistence of his troops, to the old Irish exaction of coyne and livery,—a mode of taxation which he himself had first brought into use among the English (having resorted to it, in the preceding reign, for the support of the war against Bruce,) and which his cousin the earl of Kildare, now readily adopted, after his example.

The following year was but a repetition of the same violent scenes, with the same turbulent actors on both sides engaged in them; and under the two several heads of English dissension and Irish insurrection, may be classed all that we find recorded of its stormy course. The unconquered Mac Geoghegans were again up in the county of Meath; but being attacked by the earls of Ulster and Ormond, they were put to flight, after a spirited resistance, leaving the sons of three Irish kings among the slain. A. D. Scarcely had the Mac Geoghegans been thus dispersed, when a yet more troublesome 1330. enemy, O'Brian appeared in the field; and a parliament was held forthwith in Kilkenny, at which there were present, besides the archbishop of Dublin, the earls of Ulster and Ormond, the lord William Bermingham, and the lord Walter de Burgh of Connaught; each bringing with him a considerable force, for the purpose of marching against O'Brian, and dislodging him from a strong post in the neighbourhood of Cashel, of which he had got possession.*

But, even while thus engaged on a great public service, there were some of these self-willed and contentious lords who could not refrain from indulging their own personal vengeance; and the De Burghs, on their way to Limerick in pursuit of O'Brian, wantonly wasted and plundered the earl of Desmond's lands, carrying away with them considerable booty. This outrage aroused all the animosity between the two families; and to such alarming lengths did their feuds proceed, that the lord justice found himself compelled to seize on the heads of both factions, and to commit the two lords, Maurice of Desmond and the earl of Ulster, to the custody of the marshal of Limerick.†

During these feuds of the English among themselves, the wretched natives, taking advantage of the general confusion, and perhaps intoxicated with opening prospects of revenge, committed, in Lienster, one of those savagely cruel acts which occur but too commonly in their history, and show, as contrasted with the general kindliness of the national temper, of what anomalous ingredients human character may be composed. While pursuing their course of ravage, this mob found assembled, at their A. D. devotions, in the church of Freinston, about fourscore people; who, perceiving that 1331. their own doom was inevitable thought only of saving the priest, and earnestly besought of the soldiers to spare his life. These ruffians, however deaf to all entreaties, interposed their javelins to prevent the holy man's escape, though he held the Host in his hand; and then, setting fire to the building, completed their work of sacrilege by burning church, priest, and congregation together. But this inhuman rabble was not suffered to go unpunished. The English citizens of Wexford, gathering courage from despair, ventured to attack their brute force, and putting four hundred of them to the sword, spread such a panic among the remainder, that they all fled in confusion, and were most of them drowned in the river Slaney.

At the commencement of the following year, we find the king, by his writ, appointing the earl of Ulster, to be his lord-lieutenant; while, at the same time, sir An- A. D. thony Lucy, a man of high reputation in England, but of a severe and unbending 1331. character, was sent over as lord justice, bringing with him the lord Hugh de Lacy, who had been pardoned, and was now restored to some share of favour. The administration of this governor commenced under favourable auspices. Little more than a week had elapsed, from the time of his arrival, before a great victory was gained ove at a place called Finnagh, in Meath. The new lord-justice, however, had co prepossessed with those jealous prejudices and suspicions which used, in form be harboured only against the natives, but which, of late, had begun to be those, also, among the old English, who, whether from int some more generous motive sought to recommend themselv pressed native population. Among the most distinguished rice, earl of Desmond, whose popular qualities, added to his him an influence throughout the country which was found, ful as to throw the authority of the government itself int Lucy, who had come prepared to uphold sternly the power

* Annal. Hibern. † Annal. Hibern..—Marlebourough

Though so frequently repulsed in their efforts to obtain the protection of English law, the natives again, in the second year of this monarch's reign, preferred a petition to the crown, praying that the Irish might be permitted to use the law of England without being obliged to purchase charters of denization to qualify them for that privilege.* The writ of the king recommending this prayer to the "unprejudiced" attention of the lord justice differs little in phrase or tone from those of his predecessors on the same point; nor is any thing more said of the petition or its significant prayer, during the remainder of this king's reign.

Under the government of sir John Darcy new insurrections broke forth in the provinces of the south; and while Mac Geoghegan took the field at the head of his
A. D. 1329. followers in Westmeath, O'Brian of Thomond held forth the signal of insurrection to the septs of Munster. At this critical juncture, the infatuated English were employed in murdering each other; and a treacherous massacre which took place in Orgiel, exhibited the frightful spectacle of not less than 160 Englishmen, among whom were the earl of Louth, Talbot of Malahide, and many more gentlemen of rank, lying basely butchered by their own countrymen, the Gernons, Savages, and others. Almost at the same, time the Barrys, Roches, and other English in Munster, were guilty of a no less atrocious and sweeping act of carnage upon the lord Philip Bodnet, Hugh Condon, and about 140 of their followers, all of whom were, at one fierce swoop, made victims to the factious rage and perfidious cruelty of their own countrymen.

It was, assuredly, but just retribution that, in the fair and open field of fight, the curse of defeat should light upon the arms of those who had dishonoured the name of soldier by such base and craven cruelty; and, in every direction, discomfiture and disaster appear to have attended the course of the English troops. The force marched by lord Thomas Butler into West Meath was put to rout near Mullingar, with considerable loss, by the chief, Mac Geoghegan. Sir Simon Genevil, in like manner, suffered a signal defeat at Carbery, in the county of Kildare; while Brian O'Brian ravaged, at will, over the whole country, and, among other achievements, burnt down the towns of Athassel and Tipperary.

Unable to cope with so general a spirit of insurrection, the lord justice saw that he
A. D. 1330. was left no other resource than to call in the aid of that powerful and popular nobleman, Maurice Fitz-Thomas, who had a few months before† been created earl of Desmond, with a grant, at the same time, of all the regalities, liberties, and other royal privileges of the county of Kerry.‡

Thus were two more powerful seignories added to the many already created, empowering a proud and upstart oligarchy to domineer over the whole land. The distracting oppression, indeed, of petty kingship under which the country, in its old, independent state, groaned, was now but replaced by a form of toparchy still more insulting and odious, inasmuch as the multifold scourge had passed from the hands of natives into those of aliens and intruders. The palatinate now granted to Desmond formed the ninth of those petty sovereignties into which the kingdom had been wantonly parcelled in order to enrich and exalt a few favoured individuals, not more to the injury of the people than to the usurpation and abuse of the prerogatives of the crown.§ For, in fact, these palatine lords had royal jurisdiction throughout their territories; made barons and knights, and erected courts for civil and criminal causes, as well as for the management of their own revenues, according to the forms in which the king's courts were established in Dublin.‖ They made their own judges, sheriffs, and coroners; nor did the king's writ run in the palatinates, though they comprised more than two parts of the English colonies.¶

In compliance with the desire of the government, and under a promise from them of king's pay, Desmond, at the head of nearly 10,000 men, having the O'Brians for his allies, took the field against the combined septs of Leinster, the O'Nolans, O'Mor-

* Prynne, 266. † Lodge.

‡ With the exception, as usual, of the four pleas thus particularized in the words of the patent: "Quatuor placitis, videlicet, *incendio, raptu, forestal', et thesauro invento*, ac etiam *proficuo de croceis*, duntaxat exceptis."

§ "Of this sort are the grants of counties palatine in Ireland, which though at first were granted upon good consideration when they were first conquered, for that those lands lay then as a very border to the wild Irish, subject to continual invasion, so as it was needful to give them great privileges for the defence of the inhabitants thereof; yet now that it is no more a border, nor frontiered with enemies, why should such a privilege be any longer continued?"—Spenser, *View of the State of Ireland.*

‖ Davies.—According to Lynch, the jurisdiction of the Irish seignories was not quite so extensive as it is represented by sir John Davies. "It is not easy (he says) to determine precisely the jurisdiction belonging to palatinates, or 'comtes paleis,' but if it was thought that in Ireland there at any time existed such a palatinate as that of Chester, where a subject created his own barons, held his own parliament, &c., such an opinion will prove wholly untenable."—*View of the Legal Institutions*, &c.

¶ Ibid.

roughs, and O'Dempsys; and laying waste all their lands, compelled them to submit and give hostages, having retaken the castle of Ley from the O'Dempsys. The funds of the government being found insufficient to defray the expenses of this war, or discharge the king's pay promised to Desmond, that lord had recourse, for the subsistence of his troops, to the old Irish exaction of coyne and livery,—a mode of taxation which he himself had first brought into use among the English (having resorted to it, in the preceding reign, for the support of the war against Bruce,) and which his cousin the earl of Kildare, now readily adopted, after his example.

The following year was but a repetition of the same violent scenes, with the same turbulent actors on both sides engaged in them; and under the two several heads of English dissension and Irish insurrection, may be classed all that we find recorded of its stormy course. The unconquered Mac Geoghegans were again up in the county of Meath; but being attacked by the earls of Ulster and Ormond, they were put to flight, after a spirited resistance, leaving the sons of three Irish kings among the slain. Scarcely had the Mac Geoghegans been thus dispersed, when a yet more troublesome enemy, O'Brian appeared in the field; and a parliament was held forthwith in Kilkenny, at which there were present, besides the archbishop of Dublin, the earls of Ulster and Ormond, the lord William Bermingham, and the lord Walter de Burgh of Connaught; each bringing with him a considerable force, for the purpose of marching against O'Brian, and dislodging him from a strong post in the neighbourhood of Cashel, of which he had got possession.* A. D. 1330.

But, even while thus engaged on a great public service, there were some of these self-willed and contentious lords who could not refrain from indulging their own personal vengeance; and the De Burghs, on their way to Limerick in pursuit of O'Brian, wantonly wasted and plundered the earl of Desmond's lands, carrying away with them considerable booty. This outrage aroused all the animosity between the two families; and to such alarming lengths did their feuds proceed, that the lord justice found himself compelled to seize on the heads of both factions, and to commit the two lords, Maurice of Desmond and the earl of Ulster, to the custody of the marshal of Limerick.†

During these feuds of the English among themselves, the wretched natives, taking advantage of the general confusion, and perhaps intoxicated with opening prospects of revenge, committed, in Lienster, one of those savagely cruel acts which occur but too commonly in their history, and show, as contrasted with the general kindliness of the national temper, of what anomalous ingredients human character may be composed. While pursuing their course of ravage, this mob found assembled, at their devotions, in the church of Freinston, about fourscore people; who, perceiving that their own doom was inevitable thought only of saving the priest, and earnestly besought of the soldiers to spare his life. These ruffians, however deaf to all entreaties, interposed their javelins to prevent the holy man's escape, though he held the Host in his hand; and then, setting fire to the building, completed their work of sacrilege by burning church, priest, and congregation together. But this inhuman rabble was not suffered to go unpunished. The English citizens of Wexford, gathering courage from despair, ventured to attack their brute force, and putting four hundred of them to the sword, spread such a panic among the remainder, that they all fled in confusion, and were most of them drowned in the river Slaney. A. D. 1331.

At the commencement of the following year, we find the king, by his writ, appointing the earl of Ulster, to be his lord-lieutenant; while, at the same time, sir Anthony Lucy, a man of high reputation in England, but of a severe and unbending character, was sent over as lord justice, bringing with him the lord Hugh de Lacy, who had been pardoned, and was now restored to some share of favour. The administration of this governor commenced under favourable auspices. Little more than a week had elapsed, from the time of his arrival, before a great victory was gained over the Irish, at a place called Finnagh, in Meath. The new lord-justice, however, had come strongly prepossessed with those jealous prejudices and suspicions which used, in former times, to be harboured only against the natives, but which, of late, had begun to be extended to those, also, among the old English, who, whether from interest, love of popularity, or some more generous motive sought to recommend themselves to the good will of the oppressed native population. Among the most distinguished of these Anglo-Irish was Maurice, earl of Desmond, whose popular qualities, added to his great wealth and station, gave him an influence throughout the country which was found, in many instances, so powerful as to throw the authority of the government itself into the shade. To sir Anthony Lucy, who had come prepared to uphold sternly the powers entrusted to him, this rival A. D. 1331.

* Annal. Hiberu. † Annal. Hiberu..—Marleburrough's Chronicle.

Though so frequently repulsed in their efforts to obtain the protection of English law, the natives again, in the second year of this monarch's reign, preferred a petition to the crown, praying that the Irish might be permitted to use the law of England without being obliged to purchase charters of denization to qualify them for that privilege.* The writ of the king recommending this prayer to the "unprejudiced" attention of the lord justice differs little in phrase or tone from those of his predecessors on the same point; nor is any thing more said of the petition or its significant prayer, during the remainder of this king's reign.

Under the government of sir John Darcy new insurrections broke forth in the provinces of the south; and while Mac Geoghegan took the field at the head of his
A. D. 1329. followers in Westmeath, O'Brian of Thomond held forth the signal of insurrection to the septs of Munster. At this critical juncture, the infatuated English were employed in murdering each other; and a treacherous massacre which took place in Orgiel, exhibited the frightful spectacle of not less than 160 Englishmen, among whom were the earl of Louth, Talbot of Malahide, and many more gentlemen of rank, lying basely butchered by their own countrymen, the Gernons, Savages, and others. Almost at the same, time the Barrys, Roches, and other English in Munster, were guilty of a no less atrocious and sweeping act of carnage upon the lord Philip Bodnet, Hugh Condon, and about 140 of their followers, all of whom were, at one fierce swoop, made victims to the factious rage and perfidious cruelty of their own countrymen.

It was, assuredly, but just retribution that, in the fair and open field of fight, the curse of defeat should light upon the arms of those who had dishonoured the name of soldier by such base and craven cruelty; and, in every direction, discomfiture and disaster appear to have attended the course of the English troops. The force marched by lord Thomas Butler into West Meath was put to rout near Mullingar, with considerable loss, by the chief, Mac Geoghegan. Sir Simon Genevil, in like manner, suffered a signal defeat at Carbery, in the county of Kildare; while Brian O'Brian ravaged, at will, over the whole country, and, among other achievements, burnt down the towns of Athassel and Tipperary.

Unable to cope with so general a spirit of insurrection, the lord justice saw that he
A. D. 1330. was left no other resource than to call in the aid of that powerful and popular nobleman, Maurice Fitz-Thomas, who had a few months before† been created earl of Desmond, with a grant, at the same time, of all the regalities, liberties, and other royal privileges of the county of Kerry.‡

Thus were two more powerful seignories added to the many already created, empowering a proud and upstart oligarchy to domineer over the whole land. The distracting oppression, indeed, of petty kingship under which the country, in its old, independent state, groaned, was now but replaced by a form of toparchy still more insulting and odious, inasmuch as the multifold scourge had passed from the hands of natives into those of aliens and intruders. The palatinate now granted to Desmond formed the ninth of those petty sovereignties into which the kingdom had been wantonly parcelled in order to enrich and exalt a few favoured individuals, not more to the injury of the people than to the usurpation and abuse of the prerogatives of the crown.§ For, in fact, these palatine lords had royal jurisdiction throughout their territories; made barons and knights, and erected courts for civil and criminal causes, as well as for the management of their own revenues, according to the forms in which the king's courts were established in Dublin.‖ They made their own judges, sheriffs, and coroners; nor did the king's writ run in the palatinates, though they comprised more than two parts of the English colonies.¶

In compliance with the desire of the government, and under a promise from them of king's pay, Desmond, at the head of nearly 10,000 men, having the O'Brians for his allies, took the field against the combined septs of Leinster, the O'Nolans, O'Mor-

* Prynne, 266. † Lodge.

‡ With the exception, as usual, of the four pleas thus particularized in the words of the patent: "Quatuor placitis, videlicet, *incendio, raptu, forestal', et thesauro invento*, ac etiam *proficuo de croceis*, duntaxat exceptis."

§ "Of this sort are the grants of counties palatine in Ireland, which though at first were granted upon good consideration when they were first conquered, for that those lands lay then as a very border to the wild Irish, subject to continual invasion, so as it was needful to give them great privileges for the defence of the inhabitants thereof; yet now that it is no more a border, nor frontiered with enemies, why should such a privilege be any longer continued?"—Spenser, *View of the State of Ireland*.

‖ Davies.—According to Lynch, the jurisdiction of the Irish seignories was not quite so extensive as it is represented by sir John Davies. "It is not easy (he says) to determine precisely the jurisdiction belonging to palatinates, or 'contes paleis;' but if it was thought that in Ireland there at any time existed such a palatinate as that of Chester, where a subject created his own barons, held his own parliament, &c., such an opinion will prove wholly untenable."—*View of the Legal Institutions*, &c.

¶ Ibid.

roughs, and O'Dempsys; and laying waste all their lands, compelled them to submit and give hostages, having retaken the castle of Ley from the O'Dempsys. The funds of the government being found insufficient to defray the expenses of this war, or discharge the king's pay promised to Desmond, that lord had recourse, for the subsistence of his troops, to the old Irish exaction of coyne and livery,—a mode of taxation which he himself had first brought into use among the English (having resorted to it, in the preceding reign, for the support of the war against Bruce,) and which his cousin the earl of Kildare, now readily adopted, after his example.

The following year was but a repetition of the same violent scenes, with the same turbulent actors on both sides engaged in them; and under the two several heads of English dissension and Irish insurrection, may be classed all that we find recorded of its stormy course. The unconquered Mac Geoghegans were again up in the county of Meath; but being attacked by the earls of Ulster and Ormond, they were put to flight, after a spirited resistance, leaving the sons of three Irish kings among the slain. Scarcely had the Mac Geoghegans been thus dispersed, when a yet more troublesome enemy, O'Brian appeared in the field; and a parliament was held forthwith in Kilkenny, at which there were present, besides the archbishop of Dublin, the earls of Ulster and Ormond, the lord William Bermingham, and the lord Walter de Burgh of Connaught; each bringing with him a considerable force, for the purpose of marching against O'Brian, and dislodging him from a strong post in the neighbourhood of Cashel, of which he had got possession.* A. D. 1330.

But, even while thus engaged on a great public service, there were some of these self-willed and contentious lords who could not refrain from indulging their own personal vengeance; and the De Burghs, on their way to Limerick in pursuit of O'Brian, wantonly wasted and plundered the earl of Desmond's lands, carrying away with them considerable booty. This outrage aroused all the animosity between the two families; and to such alarming lengths did their feuds proceed, that the lord justice found himself compelled to seize on the heads of both factions, and to commit the two lords, Maurice of Desmond and the earl of Ulster, to the custody of the marshal of Limerick.†

During these feuds of the English among themselves, the wretched natives, taking advantage of the general confusion, and perhaps intoxicated with opening prospects of revenge, committed, in Lienster, one of those savagely cruel acts which occur but too commonly in their history, and show, as contrasted with the general kindliness of the national temper, of what anomalous ingredients human character may be composed. While pursuing their course of ravage, this mob found assembled, at their devotions, in the church of Freinston, about fourscore people; who, perceiving that their own doom was inevitable thought only of saving the priest, and earnestly besought of the soldiers to spare his life. These ruffians, however deaf to all entreaties, interposed their javelins to prevent the holy man's escape, though he held the Host in his hand; and then, setting fire to the building, completed their work of sacrilege by burning church, priest, and congregation together. But this inhuman rabble was not suffered to go unpunished. The English citizens of Wexford, gathering courage from despair, ventured to attack their brute force, and putting four hundred of them to the sword, spread such a panic among the remainder, that they all fled in confusion, and were most of them drowned in the river Slaney. A. D. 1331.

At the commencement of the following year, we find the king, by his writ, appointing the earl of Ulster, to be his lord-lieutenant; while, at the same time, sir Anthony Lucy, a man of high reputation in England, but of a severe and unbending character, was sent over as lord justice, bringing with him the lord Hugh de Lacy, who had been pardoned, and was now restored to some share of favour. The administration of this governor commenced under favourable auspices. Little more than a week had elapsed, from the time of his arrival, before a great victory was gained over the Irish, at a place called Finnagh, in Meath. The new lord-justice, however, had come strongly prepossessed with those jealous prejudices and suspicions which used, in former times, to be harboured only against the natives, but which, of late, had begun to be extended to those, also, among the old English, who, whether from interest, love of popularity, or some more generous motive sought to recommend themselves to the good will of the oppressed native population. Among the most distinguished of these Anglo-Irish was Maurice, earl of Desmond, whose popular qualities, added to his great wealth and station, gave him an influence throughout the country which was found, in many instances, so powerful as to throw the authority of the government itself into the shade. To sir Anthony Lucy, who had come prepared to uphold sternly the powers entrusted to him, this rival A. D. 1331.

* Annal Hibern. † Annal. Hibern.—Marleburrough's Chronicle.

ascendency was of course, peculiarly obnoxious, and the jealousy it excited in his mind soon found an opportunity of exploding.

A parliament, summoned by him to meet at Dublin shortly after his arrival, having exhibited but a thin attendance of great lords, he thought right to adjourn it to the 7th of July, when it was held at Kilkenny; and there Thomas, earl of Kildare, with other lords and gentlemen who had on the former occasion absented themselves, gave their attendance and were freely pardoned; having first been sworn on the Holy Evangelists, and the relics of the saints, to bear allegiance and keep the peace for the future. There were, however, many of the powerful lords, and, among the rest, Maurice of Desmond, who had pointedly withheld their presence; and an outbreak of the Irish at the same time in Leinster, where they burnt the castle of Ferns, having appeared to the lord justice to indicate concert between these rebels and the disaffected lords, he proceeded summarily to act upon this suspicion. In the month of September the lord Henry Mandeville was, by warrant from the chief justice, apprehended; and in the following month the earl of Desmond was, under the same authority, arrested at Limerick; and being brought from thence to Dublin, was there made prisoner in the castle.* Several other arrests took place under the same suspicion, and, in some instances, it would appear, not without just grounds; as the lord William Bermingham, who, together with his son, was seized at Clonmel in the February following, was, notwithstanding his splendid military career, executed at Dublin;—his son Walter only escaping the same fate in consequence of his being in holy orders.†

A. D. 1332.

Shortly after the new lord justice's arrival, articles were sent over by the king for the reformation of the state of Ireland.‡ It was not the fault, as we have seen, either of this monarch or of his predecessors, that the great benefits of English law had not been extended to the natives in general; and one of the ordinances now transmitted§ was framed with a view to this wise policy, being couched in the following terms:—"That one and the same law be observed to the Irish and the English;"—an exception being added, in the case of betages,§ who, like the English villain, were entirely in the power of their lords. But this royal mandate, like all the rest, in the same liberal spirit, that had preceded it, was rendered null by the blind selfishness of the magnates to whom it was addressed. Another of these ordinances was directed against that standing evil, absenteeism.

The public announcement at this time, by the king, of his intention to pass over into Ireland,‖ and apply himself personally to the task of reforming the state of that realm, might well be classed with those other dawnings of better fortune which now and then opened upon hapless Ireland, merely to close again in darkness were it not manifest that all the preparations made ostensibly for the king's Irish visit were but as a blind, to divert attention from the formidable expedition then preparing against Scotland. But, although the advantage of the king's presence was lost to the Irish,¶ the very steps taken in contemplation of his visit were such as, by quickening the zeal of the subordinate authorities, and directing their attention to abuses likely to be sifted, could not fail to be of at least temporary service. Thus, among other politic measures, it was commanded that all persons possessing lands in Ireland should repair thither for the advantage and defence of that kingdom; and likewise that search should be made through the king's records, to learn what steps had been taken for the amendment of the state of the Irish.**

A. D. 1331. to 1332.

The king had sent writs to the earl of Ulster and other great lords, announcing his intention of coming; and his summons to the absentees, dated January 28th, 1332, requiring them to accompany him, and recover their possessions out of the hands of the rebels, is addressed to Thomas, earl of Norfolk, and twenty-two other English lords and gentlemen. But the secret scheme which had been all this time maturing against Scotland was now ripe for execution; and the mask he had worn towards both countries might with impunity be cast aside. All the supplies, therefore, that had been granted for his pacific visit to Ireland, he, without any scruple, appropriated to his memorable Scot-

* Annal. Hibern. † Hanmer.—Marleburrough's Chronicle.

‡ Prynne, 267.—Cox.

§ "Quod una et eadem lex fiat tam Hibernicis quam Anglicis; excepta servitute Betagiorum, penes dominos suos, eodem modo quo usitatum est in Anglia de Villanis." The term *Betage* is thus explained by Harris:—"It would seem to appear that *villains, natives, originaries* or *original tenants*, and *betages* import much the same thing; and that the *English villain* and *Irish betagh* is the same person."—Ware, *Antiquities, &c.*, chap 20.

‖ Rymer, "De Passagio Regis in Hiberniam meditato," t. iv. p. 503.

¶ Rymer, "De Passagio Regis ad partes Hibernim prorogato," tom. iv. p. 523. ** Cox.

tish warfare; and found, in the brilliant victory at Halidon Hill, a result far more suited to his chivalrous tastes than any that the precious, but slow and remote, triumphs of the legislator could furnish.

The only measure which appears to have been taken by him towards the pacification of Ireland, was the issue of writs to the lord justice, and other public authorities, empowering them to admit to the king's peace all disaffected persons, as well English as Irish, upon such terms as the lord justice and his council should deem honourable and expedient.

In the month of June, this year, William de Burgh, the third earl of Ulster, was treacherously murdered near Carrickfergus by his own servants;—an event which, far more from the youth and exalted station of the particular victim, than from any rarity of such crimes, excited a strong and general sensation throughout the country.* One feature of savage life that marked this murder was the great number of persons engaged in it. The lord justice, we are told, on hastening to Carrickfergus to see the delinquents duly punished, found that the country people had anticipated his purpose, and killed 300 of the murderers and their abettors in one day. For a long time after the following clause used to be inserted in all pardons, "With the exception of the death of the late earl of Ulster."† A. D. 1333.

The young lord, who was thus cut off in his twenty-first year, left an only child, a daughter, the heiress of his great possessions, who was married, in the year 1352, to Lionel, third son of king Edward III. This prince was then created, in her right, earl of Ulster, and also lord of Connaught; and, after him, these titles and possessions were enjoyed, through marriage or descent, by different princes of the royal blood; until at length, in the person of Edward IV., they became the special inheritance and revenue of the English crown.

The usual process by which foreign settlers, in a country already well peopled, become by degrees intermixed and incorporated with the great mass of the population, and which, in all cases save that of Ireland, seems to have been regarded as a natural and salutary result, was, at the period where we are now arrived, in rapid progress among the Anglo-Irish; and in the instance of the powerful family of the De Burghs, received a more quickening impulse onward from motives of rapacity and ambition. Immediately on the earl's death, the chiefs of the junior branches of the family, then residing in Connaught, fearing the transfer of his large possessions into strange hands by the marriage of the heiress, took advantage of the opportunity now offered of seizing upon his estates; and the two most powerful of the family, sir William, or Ulick, the progenitor of the earls of Clanricarde, and sir Edmond Albanach, the ancestor of the earls of Mayo, having confederated together, and declared themselves independent, took possession of the entire territory;—the town of Galway, together with the country as far as the Shannon, falling to the lot of sir William. Still more to enlist the sympathy of the natives on their side, they renounced the English dress and language, and adopted those of the country; carrying the metamorphosis so far as even to change their names,—sir William taking the title of Mac William Eighter, and sir Edmond that of Mac William Oughter.‡

The example set by these "degenerate English," as they came to be styled, began, from this period, to be, very extensively followed. Among the inferior branches of the De Burgh family, one named itself Mac Hubbard, and another Mac David. Similar instances of degeneracy, or rather defection, became common throughout the whole kingdom; and the frequent occurrence of the words "English rebels" in the legal records of this reign shows that disaffection to the crown was now no longer confined to mere "Irish enemies."

In the spring of this year, the earl of Desmond, after having been imprisoned in the castle of Dublin for more than eighteen months, was released from his confinement; and, in a parliament held soon after, almost all the chief noblemen of the land engaged them-

* The following particulars of this murder are given by Lodge:—"He was murdered on Sunday, June 6, 1333, by Robert Fitz Richard Mandeville (who gave him his first wound,) and others his servants, near to the Fords, in going towards Carrickfergus, in the 21st year of his age, at the instigation, as was said, of Gyle de Burgh, wife of sir Richard Mandeville, in revenge for his having imprisoned her brother Walter and others."

† In some of these charters of pardon, the crime of adherence to the Scottish enemies is coupled, as an exception, with that of the murder of the earl of Ulster:—"Morte nup'er com' Ulton. et adherencia Scotis inimicis except."

‡ Hardiman's *History of Galway*.—"In the same province," says sir John Davies, "Bremingham, baron of Athenry, called himself Mac Yoris; Dexecester, or De'exon, was called Mac Jordan; Mangle, or De Angulo, took the name of Mac Costello. In Munster, of the great families of the Geraldines planted there, one was called Mac Morice, chief of the house of Lixnaw, and another Mac Gibbon, who was also called the White Knight. The chief of the baron of Dunboyne's house, who is a branch of the house of Ormond, took the surname of Mac Pheris."

selves and their estates as surety for his future fealty. We find him summoned also to attend the king, in his expedition into Scotland; and a writ of liberate, dated Drogheda, 1336,* shows that he then received 100*l.* for the expenses he had incurred in bringing his men at arms, hobellars and foot-soldiers, from different parts of Leinster to Drogheda, and there waiting a whole month for shipping to convey them to Scotland.

From a grant made at this time, of estates in England, to Matilda, countess of Ulster, the widow of the late murdered earl, it appears that this lady having felt a very natural dread of visiting Ireland, and no returns from her Irish possessions having been received by her, the government had taken all her castles, lands, and tenements there into their own hands, and assigned for her dowry estates of equal value in England.†

No event much worthy of notice occurs in the records of the few following years; with the doubtful exception of a most marvellous victory gained by the English over the natives in Connaught, in which, with the loss to themselves, as it is said, of but one man, they slew, 10,000 of the enemy;‡ thus bearing, in its result, a suspicious resemblance to two of the great battle-fields of this reign,—Crecy, and Halidon Hill.§

In the year 1339, the Irish were again up in arms, throughout the whole kingdom; more especially, as usual, in Munster, where the earl of Desmond, attacking the insurgents of Kerry, slew 1200 of their force, and took prisoner Maurice Fitz-Nicholas,‖ fourth lord of Kerry, who had joined the ranks of the Irish, and, being now cast into prison by Desmond, there ended his days.¶ This nobleman had, in the year 1325, been tried and attainted by the Irish parliament for a crime, the violent nature of which, as well as the remission of the capital punishment adjudged to it, mark significantly the lawless character of the times. Bearing a grudge, in consequence of some past dispute, to Desmond Mac Carthy, son and heir to Mac Carthy More, this lord attacked him, as he sat on the bench, in the court of assize, at Tralee, and laid him dead at the judge's feet.**

No less active against the Irish than Desmond, the earl of Kildare now attacked those of Leinster, pursuing the O'Dempseys†† so closely that many of them were drowned in the river Barrow; while a booty, richer, it is said, than had ever been taken in that country, was brought by the lord justice,—at that time Charlton, bishop of Hereford,—from Idrone, in the county of Carlow. In the same year, the chief governor just mentioned resigned his post to the prior of Kilmainham, Roger Outlaw, who now, for the fourth time, held that high office; but died at the beginning of the following year, having constituted Sir John Darcy lord justice of Ireland for life. But Darcy, unwilling, perhaps, to be made the instrument of measures so rigorous as those now about to be adopted, sent over as his deputy sir John Morris, a gentleman yet untried in the field of Irish politics.

The object of the policy about to be enforced by the king and his English advisers was, not merely to reduce, but, if possible, break up and disperse, that enormous mass of wealth and power which had been accumulated, in the course of nearly two centuries, by the descendants of the first English conquerors of Ireland; and the earliest intimation given by Edward of such a design had been during the administration of sir Anthony Lucy, in the Articles of Reform transmitted to that governor. In this instrument he had threatened that, if the great landholders were not more attentive to their duties, he would be compelled to take their lands and possessions into his own hands.‡‡ There was no attempt, probably, at that time, to carry this threat into execution, as we meet with no farther mention of it.

A. D. 1341. On the arrival, however, of the present lord justice, the very appointment of whom, a mere knight, was viewed as an insult by the great lords, it appeared that still more sweeping and arbitrary measures were about to be enforced against the old English; and among the first was a general resumption of all the lands, liberties, seignories, and jurisdictions that had been granted, in Ireland, not by Edward himself only, but by his father. In all cases, likewise, whether in his time or that of his predecessors, where debts due to the crown had been either remitted or suspended, it was now declared that all such indulgences were revoked, and that these debts must be strictly levied without any delay.§§ This rigorous measure he endeavoured to excuse by alleging

* Close Roll, 10 Ed. III. † Rymer, tom. v. ad ann. 1338.

‡ Marleburrough's Chronicle.

§ At Halidon Hill 30,000 of the Scots were killed; while there fell, on the English side, only 1 knight, 1 esquire, and 13 private soldiers. At Crecy, the disparity of loss was still more remarkable.

‖ Lodge.—According to Cox, he was named Nicholas Fitz-Maurice.

¶ Annal. Hibern. "He was put in prison (says the annalist,) where he died for want of meat and drink for his allowance was but very little, because he had rebelled, with the Irish, against the king and the earl."

** Lodge.

†† The O'Dempseys were one of the septs inhabiting the territory called anciently Hyfalgia, comprising a part of the county of Kildare, part of the King's County, and part of the Queen's County. Among the other septs composing this union were the O'Malones, O'Dalys, O'Mulloys, Mac Loghlin's, &c. &c.—Ware, *Antiq.*; Seward, *Typograph. Hibern.*

‡‡ Prynne, 267. §§ Ib. 272.

the necessity which he found himself under of providing for the expenses of the war just then renewed with France. Among the ordinances put forth by him, there were some for the correction of official abuses, more especially those of the king's exchequer,* which, had they not so openly formed a part of one fixed and general design to dislodge from its strongholds the ascendency of the Anglo-Irish, and plant in its place a purely English dominion, would have been welcomed as sound and rational reforms.

But, could any doubts have been entertained as to the real object of legislation, they must have been removed by an ordinance issued in this year,† wherein, addressing his justiciary, sir John Darcy, he declared that, whereas, it had appeared to him and his council that they would be better and more usefully served in Ireland by English officers having revenues and possessions in England than by Irish or English, married and possessing estates only in Ireland, he therefore ordered that his justiciary, after diligent inquiries, should remove all such officers as were married and held estates in Ireland, and replace them by fit Englishmen having lands, tenements, and benefices in England. A. D. 1342.

This open announcement of the royal purpose to exclude, in future, from all share in the government, the descendants of those who had conquered that realm, as well as of those who had ever since struggled to retain it, produced, as might have been expected, a burst of indignant feeling throughout the whole of the old English population. The jealousy long felt by the crown towards those great Anglo-Irish lords, whom its own reckless favours had nursed into such portentous strength, and who were now, comparatively, at least, with the king and his nobles, become the natural heads of the land, had already, in more than one instance, declared itself. But it was not until now that this feeling had found vent for itself in the law; or that the distinction between the two races, the English by blood and the English by birth, was resorted to as a reason or pretext for the sacrifice of the old colonists to the new. It was now too late, however, to think of dislodging an evil so long and so firmly entrenched; and the only effect of the unwise aggression was, to render the party attacked more sensible of their own power.

To allay the excitement caused by this measure, a parliament was summoned by the lord justice, to meet at Dublin in October; but the earl of Desmond, and the lords of his party, refused peremtorily to attend it; and, confederating with other great nobles, as well as some cities and corporations, they appointed, of themselves, without any reference to the head of the government, a general assembly to meet, in November, at Kilkenny. This convention, at which were present neither the lord justice nor any other of the king's officers, made itself memorable, not only by the peculiar circumstances under which it met, but also by a long and spirited petition to the king, which was the result of its deliberations, and which, though not expressly pretending to parliamentary authority, purports to be the act of the prelates, earls, barons, and commons of Ireland.‡ To understand clearly the complaints made by these petitioners of the encroachments, as they chose to consider them, of the natives, it must be borne in mind that, during the troubled reign of Edward II., and in the first years of the present, the Irish had succeeded, in more than one instance, in regaining possession of their ancient territories; and that the greater part of the lands of Leinster had been, for some time, in the hands of Mac Morrough and O'Moore, the descendants of the original princes of that province.§ A. D. 1342.

The petition, which is in old Norman French, begins by complaining that, in consequence of mal-administration and the unguarded state in which the country had been left, more than a third part of the lands conquered by the king's progenitors had been taken possession of by his Irish enemies; in consequence of which his liege English subjects had become so impoverished as to be even in want of the means of subsistence. The great castles and fortresses which, while held by the crown, formed the safeguards of the land, were now in the possession of the Irish; chiefly, as the petitioners allege, through the misconduct of the king's treasurers, who had delayed, and frequently embezzled the

* Prynne, 274, 275. † Close Roll, 15 Ed. III. See Prynne, p. 274. ‡ Pyrnne, 279.

§ Baron Finglas, *Breviate of Ireland*. It was about the beginning of Edward the Second's reign that this resumption of the lands of Leinster took place. The English lord who then held the territory of Ley having appointed one of the O'Moores to be his captain of war in that territory, this chief took possession of the country for himself,—"de servo dominus, de subjecto princeps effectus," as friar Clynne states it. And a similar appointment, about the same time, enabled Mac Morrough, the captain or chief of the Cavenaghs, to possess himself of the county of Carlow, and of the greater part of the county of Wexford.—See *Davies*, p. 194.

pay of the constables and warders. The castles of Roscommon, Rathdown, Athlone, and Bunratty had, from this and other causes, been abandoned to the enemy.

After a number of other such charges against the officers of the royal exchequer, accusing them of fraud and overreaching in almost all their transactions, and praying of the king to apply a remedy to these evils, they proceed to notice the grasping covetousness of his ministers, in holding each a number of lucrative posts; and entreat that in future none should be allowed to hold more than one office.* But the late order issued by the king, for the resumption of all grants made in Ireland by himself and his royal progenitors, was naturally the grievance on which their resentments and recollections were most alive. Recalling to his mind the gallant devotion of his liege English of Ireland, when, at their own cost, they joined the banner of his royal ancestor, in the wars of Gascony, Scotland, and Wales, they contrasted this devotion with the conduct of the English, who had been sent over to rule them, and who, wanting in means or resources of their own, and wholly ignorant of the country, came but to enrich themselves dishonourably at the expense of a people whom they misgoverned. "In return sire," say they, "for trusty and loyal services, you and your progenitors granted to divers English people of this realm lands, tenements, franchises, and remissions of debt, of which, by virtue of your charters, they have long remained in quiet possession. But now, sire, your ministers inform us that, by a late mandate from England, all these royal gifts and grants have been revoked." This act they calmly, but firmly, pronounce to be unjust and contrary to reason; as neither by their ancestors nor by themselves had their claim to the favours of the crown been ever forfeited: and they therefore pray of the king that, according to the provisions of the Great Charter, they may not be ousted of their freehold without being called in judgment.†

There are yet a number of other abuses and grievances complained of by them,—such as the seizure of lands by the king's escheators, merely for the sake of the fee they received on again restoring them; the great hardship of persons indicted for felonies, in Ireland, being compelled to appear and answer for them before the king in England; the seizure of victuals and carriages by the king's ministers, on their own sole authority, and without paying any money for them. On these, and some other subjects of complaint, the petitioners pray of the king to institute searching inquiries, and apply just and prompt remedies.

Of the nature of the answer returned by Edward to this earnest remonstrance we are left in entire ignorance; the only notice of it that appears to be extant being found in a writ addressed by him to the remonstrants;‡ wherein, acknowledging, in most gracious terms, the receipt of their petition, he acquaints them that his answer to its several prayers had been sent under the great seal to John March the chancellor, and Thomas de Wogan. He concludes this writ by informing them of his intention to pass into France with a large force, and asking their aid towards his expedition.

A. D. 1343. In the same year, sir Ralph Ufford, who had married the countess dowager of Ulster, was appointed to the office of lord justice; and, by his harsh and rigorous measures, made himself so odious throughout the country, that the long course of tempestuous weather which happened to prevail during his administration, was, by the superstition of the people, laid to his charge.§ The first act of this lord justice's government was to put down the aspiring pretensions of Desmond, who, assuming his former attitude of defiance, had refused to attend a parliament summoned by Ufford, at Dublin and appointed an assembly of his own friends and confederates, at the town of Callan.

A. D. 1345. But the new governor, by his determined conduct, defeated this bold design. The other great lords of Desmond's party, on being prohibited by the king's writ, declined their leader's soummons; while, at the same time, the lord justice, marching a force into Munster, seized on that earl's lands, and farmed them out at a rent payable yearly to the king. Getting possession also, by stratagem, of the castles of Iniskelly and Island, he hanged three knights, sir Eustace Poer, sir William Grant, and Sir John Cottrel, who had held the command of them, and against whom the charge was that they had practised the grievous and foreign exaction of coyne and livery.‖

* "Ensement, sire, pur ces qe vos ministres Dirlaund embrassont plusours offices de pur covetisie daver multz des foes, voillez sire pur vostre profit ordiner, qe nul de vos ministres illoeqes ne eyt qe un office soulement."

† "Pur quei sire vous pleise ordiner, qe eux ne soient ostæz de lour franc tenementz sanz estre appele en jugement, comela Grande Chartre voet."

‡ Close Roll, 16 Ed. III. § Annal. Hibern.

‖ By the taxes called coyne and livery, was meant food and entertainment for the soldiers and forage for the horses. It was the opinion of Spenser, that great injustice was done to the Irish landlords by the prohibition of the custom called coigny or coyne; "for all their tenants (he says) being commonly but tenants at will, they use to take of them what victuals they list; for of victuals they were wont to make small

In consequence of these strong measures, Desmond surrendered himself to the lord justice, and was let to bail on the recognizances of the earls of Ulster and Ormond, and four and twenty knights. But as (through fear, it is supposed, of the severity of the lord justice) he failed to appear, according to the condition of the recognizance, his sureties were left to answer for his unworthy default, whereby eighteen of the knights lost their estates and were utterly ruined.*

While thus successful in curbing and humbling the proud Desmond, Ufford was equally fortunate in his proceedings against the other great leader of the Anglo-Irish, Thomas, earl of Kildare; though the means employed by him for this object present such a train of mean and elaborate perfidy as no success, however important, should be suffered to sanction or excuse. Under the pretence of summoning Kildare to join the monarch with his forces, sir William Burton was sent into Munster, with two writs,—one containing the royal summons, and the other secretly empowering sir William to seize and imprison the earl. So quickly, however, on Kildare's announcement of the king's summons, did his followers crowd to the royal standard, that to produce the secret writ, with any hope of being able to execute it, would have been a worse than vain attempt. In this difficulty, the only resource left to the treacherous envoy, was that of prevailing upon the earl to suspend his levy of troops until he should have consulted with the king's council. To this proposal Kildare unsuspectingly assented; and having accompanied sir William to Dublin, for the pretended purpose, was there, while consulting with the council, in the exchequer, suddenly arrested and thrown into prison.†

In the month of April, this year, the administration of Sir Ralph Ufford, was brought to a close, by his death,—leaving behind, as we are told, one general feeling of abhorrence for his memory. Nor had this odium, in his case, been compensated by any of those worldly advantages which too often wait on a life of oppression and rapine, as he died in necessitous circumstances; and his lady, says the chronicler, who had been received like an empress, and lived like a queen, was obliged to steal away through a postern gate of the castle to avoid the curses of her enemies and the clamour of her creditors. Such are the portraits given in our annals of these two unpopular personages; but with every appearance, however, of having been exaggerated and over-coloured by party malice. Coming on a mission so odious and formidable to the fierce oligarchs of the realm, and carrying his measures with such a high hand as even the king himself shrunk from enforcing, it was, perhaps, fortunate for Ufford to be thus rescued, even by death, from the storm of hatred and persecution that would have assailed him on his retirement. The whole period of Ufford's government did not extend beyond a year and nine months; and the state of poverty, in which he is said to have died, seems rather inconsistent with the course of extortion and peculation attributed to him. A. D. 1346.

There was now a succession of no less than three chief governors in the short space of two months, under one of whom, sir John Morris, the earl of Kildare, who had been kept arbitrarily for nearly a year in prison, was, on the recognizance of twenty-four lords and gentlemen, released from confinement.

By a similar act of graciousness, and through the interposition of sir Walter Bermingham, then lord justice, Desmond was permitted to proceed to England, to lay his complaints at the foot of the throne; and was not only graciously received, but, in prosecuting his claims for redress of the wrongs inflicted upon him by Ufford, was allowed twenty shillings *per diem* for his expenses, by the king. All the estates, too, of those who had become bound for him, while in prison, were by letters patent restored to them.‡

In the year 1344, on the renewal of hostilities with France, the king had addressed a writ to the magnates of Ireland, summoning them to join him with their forces;§ and, in the present year, the earl of Kildare went with thirty men at arms and forty hobilliers,‖ to serve the king, at the siege of Calais, where, for his gallant conduct, Edward bestowed upon him the honour of knighthood. A. D. 1347.

There now ensued a period of tranquillity, for some years, such as rarely the course of our annals presents; and the causes assigned for this unusual calm, namely the favour extended by Edward to the two popular Anglo-Irish lords, and the daily expectation of

reckoning. Neither in this was the tenant wronged, for it was an ordinary and known custom, and his lord commonly used so to covenant with him, which if at any time the tenant disliked, he might freely depart at his pleasure. But now, by this statute, the said Irish lord is wronged, for that he is cut off from his customary services."—*View of the State of Ireland.*

* Cox.—For the names of Desmond's mainpriscrs, see Annal. Hibern. ad ann. 1345.

† Annal. Hibern.

‡ Annal. Hibern.—Cox.

§ Rymer, tom. v. p. 417

‖ Rymer, tom. v. p. 544.

Though so frequently repulsed in their efforts to obtain the protection of English law, the natives again, in the second year of this monarch's reign, preferred a petition to the crown, praying that the Irish might be permitted to use the law of England without being obliged to purchase charters of denization to qualify them for that privilege.* The writ of the king recommending this prayer to the "unprejudiced" attention of the lord justice differs little in phrase or tone from those of his predecessors on the same point; nor is any thing more said of the petition or its significant prayer, during the remainder of this king's reign.

Under the government of sir John Darcy new insurrections broke forth in the provinces of the south; and while Mac Geoghegan took the field at the head of his
A. D. 1329. followers in Westmeath, O'Brian of Thomond held forth the signal of insurrection to the septs of Munster. At this critical juncture, the infatuated English were employed in murdering each other; and a treacherous massacre which took place in Orgiel, exhibited the frightful spectacle of not less than 160 Englishmen, among whom were the earl of Louth, Talbot of Malahide, and many more gentlemen of rank, lying basely butchered by their own countrymen, the Gernons, Savages, and others. Almost at the same, time the Barrys, Roches, and other English in Munster, were guilty of a no less atrocious and sweeping act of carnage upon the lord Philip Bodnet, Hugh Condon, and about 140 of their followers, all of whom were, at one fierce swoop, made victims to the factious rage and perfidious cruelty of their own countrymen.

It was, assuredly, but just retribution that, in the fair and open field of fight, the curse of defeat should light upon the arms of those who had dishonoured the name of soldier by such base and craven cruelty; and, in every direction, discomfiture and disaster appear to have attended the course of the English troops. The force marched by lord Thomas Butler into West Meath was put to rout near Mullingar, with considerable loss, by the chief, Mac Geoghegan. Sir Simon Genevil, in like manner, suffered a signal defeat at Carbery, in the county of Kildare; while Brian O'Brian ravaged, at will, over the whole country, and, among other achievements, burnt down the towns of Athassel and Tipperary.

Unable to cope with so general a spirit of insurrection, the lord justice saw that he
A. D. 1330. was left no other resource than to call in the aid of that powerful and popular nobleman, Maurice Fitz-Thomas, who had a few months before† been created earl of Desmond, with a grant, at the same time, of all the regalities, liberties, and other royal privileges of the county of Kerry.‡

Thus were two more powerful seignories added to the many already created, empowering a proud and upstart oligarchy to domineer over the whole land. The distracting oppression, indeed, of petty kingship under which the country, in its old, independent state, groaned, was now but replaced by a form of toparchy still more insulting and odious, inasmuch as the multifold scourge had passed from the hands of natives into those of aliens and intruders. The palatinate now granted to Desmond formed the ninth of those petty sovereignties into which the kingdom had been wantonly parcelled in order to enrich and exalt a few favoured individuals, not more to the injury of the people than to the usurpation and abuse of the prerogatives of the crown.§ For, in fact, these palatine lords had royal jurisdiction throughout their territories; made barons and knights, and erected courts for civil and criminal causes, as well as for the management of their own revenues, according to the forms in which the king's courts were established in Dublin.‖ They made their own judges, sheriffs, and coroners; nor did the king's writ run in the palatinates, though they comprised more than two parts of the English colonies.¶

In compliance with the desire of the government, and under a promise from them of king's pay, Desmond, at the head of nearly 10,000 men, having the O'Brians for his allies, took the field against the combined septs of Leinster, the O'Nolans, O'Mor-

* Prynne, 266. † Lodge.

‡ With the exception, as usual, of the four pleas thus particularized in the words of the patent: "Quatuor placitis, videlicet, *incendio, raptu, forestal', et thesauro invento*, ac etiam *proficuo de croceis*, duntaxat exceptis."

§ "Of this sort are the grants of counties palatine in Ireland, which though at first were granted upon good consideration when they were first conquered, for that those lands lay then as a very border to the wild Irish, subject to continual invasion, so as it was needful to give them great privileges for the defence of the inhabitants thereof; yet now that it is no more a border, nor frontiered with enemies, why should such a privilege be any longer continued?"—Spenser, *View of the State of Ireland.*

‖ Davies.—According to Lynch, the jurisdiction of the Irish seignories was not quite so extensive as it is represented by sir John Davies. "It is not easy (he says) to determine precisely the jurisdiction belonging to palatinates, or 'contes paleis;' but if it was thought that in Ireland there at any time existed such a palatinate as that of Chester, where a subject created his own barons, held his own parliament, &c., such an opinion will prove wholly untenable."—*View of the Legal Institutions, &c.*

¶ Ibid.

roughs, and O'Dempsys; and laying waste all their lands, compelled them to submit and give hostages, having retaken the castle of Ley from the O'Dempsys. The funds of the government being found insufficient to defray the expenses of this war, or discharge the king's pay promised to Desmond, that lord had recourse, for the subsistence of his troops, to the old Irish exaction of coyne and livery,—a mode of taxation which he himself had first brought into use among the English (having resorted to it, in the preceding reign, for the support of the war against Bruce,) and which his cousin the earl of Kildare, now readily adopted, after his example.

The following year was but a repetition of the same violent scenes, with the same turbulent actors on both sides engaged in them; and under the two several heads of English dissension and Irish insurrection, may be classed all that we find recorded of its stormy course. The unconquered Mac Geoghegans were again up in the county of Meath; but being attacked by the earls of Ulster and Ormond, they were put to flight, after a spirited resistance, leaving the sons of three Irish kings among the slain. A. D. Scarcely had the Mac Geoghegans been thus dispersed, when a yet more troublesome 1330. enemy, O'Brian appeared in the field; and a parliament was held forthwith in Kilkenny, at which there were present, besides the archbishop of Dublin, the earls of Ulster and Ormond, the lord William Bermingham, and the lord Walter de Burgh of Connaught; each bringing with him a considerable force, for the purpose of marching against O'Brian, and dislodging him from a strong post in the neighbourhood of Cashel, of which he had got possession.*

But, even while thus engaged on a great public service, there were some of these self-willed and contentious lords who could not refrain from indulging their own personal vengeance; and the De Burghs, on their way to Limerick in pursuit of O'Brian, wantonly wasted and plundered the earl of Desmond's lands, carrying away with them considerable booty. This outrage aroused all the animosity between the two families; and to such alarming lengths did their feuds proceed, that the lord justice found himself compelled to seize on the heads of both factions, and to commit the two lords, Maurice of Desmond and the earl of Ulster, to the custody of the marshal of Limerick.†

During these feuds of the English among themselves, the wretched natives, taking advantage of the general confusion, and perhaps intoxicated with opening prospects of revenge, committed, in Lienster, one of those savagely cruel acts which occur but too commonly in their history, and show, as contrasted with the general kindliness of the national temper, of what anomalous ingredients human character may be composed. While pursuing their course of ravage, this mob found assembled, at their A. D. devotions, in the church of Freinston, about fourscore people; who, perceiving that 1331. their own doom was inevitable thought only of saving the priest, and earnestly besought of the soldiers to spare his life. These ruffians, however deaf to all entreaties, interposed their javelins to prevent the holy man's escape, though he held the Host in his hand; and then, setting fire to the building, completed their work of sacrilege by burning church, priest, and congregation together. But this inhuman rabble was not suffered to go unpunished. The English citizens of Wexford, gathering courage from despair, ventured to attack their brute force, and putting four hundred of them to the sword, spread such a panic among the remainder, that they all fled in confusion, and were most of them drowned in the river Slaney.

At the commencement of the following year, we find the king, by his writ, appointing the earl of Ulster, to be his lord-lieutenant; while, at the same time, sir An- A. D. thony Lucy, a man of high reputation in England, but of a severe and unbending 1331. character, was sent over as lord justice, bringing with him the lord Hugh de Lacy, who had been pardoned, and was now restored to some share of favour. The administration of this governor commenced under favourable auspices. Little more than a week had elapsed, from the time of his arrival, before a great victory was gained over the Irish, at a place called Finnagh, in Meath. The new lord-justice, however, had come strongly prepossessed with those jealous prejudices and suspicions which used, in former times, to be harboured only against the natives, but which, of late, had begun to be extended to those, also, among the old English, who, whether from interest, love of popularity, or some more generous motive sought to recommend themselves to the good will of the oppressed native population. Among the most distinguished of these Anglo-Irish was Maurice, earl of Desmond, whose popular qualities, added to his great wealth and station, gave him an influence throughout the country which was found, in many instances, so powerful as to throw the authority of the government itself into the shade. To sir Anthony Lucy, who had come prepared to uphold sternly the powers entrusted to him, this rival

* Annal. Hibern. † Annal. Hibern..—Marleburrough's Chronicle.

ascendency was of course, peculiarly obnoxious, and the jealousy it excited in his mind soon found an opportunity of exploding.

A parliament, summoned by him to meet at Dublin shortly after his arrival, having exhibited but a thin attendance of great lords, he thought right to adjourn it to the 7th of July, when it was held at Kilkenny; and there Thomas, earl of Kildare, with other lords and gentlemen who had on the former occasion absented themselves, gave their attendance and were freely pardoned; having first been sworn on the Holy Evangelists, and the relics of the saints, to bear allegiance and keep the peace for the future. There were, however, many of the powerful lords, and, among the rest, Maurice of Desmond, who had pointedly withheld their presence; and an outbreak of the Irish at the same time in Leinster, where they burnt the castle of Ferns, having appeared to the lord justice to indicate concert between these rebels and the disaffected lords, he proceeded summarily to act upon this suspicion. In the month of September the lord Henry Mandeville was, by warrant from the chief justice, apprehended; and in the following month the earl of Desmond was, under the same authority, arrested at Limerick; and being brought from thence to Dublin, was there made prisoner in the castle.* Several other arrests took place under the same suspicion, and, in some instances, it would appear, not without just grounds; as the lord William Bermingham, who, together with his son, was seized at Clonmel in the February following, was, notwithstanding his splendid military career, executed at Dublin;—his son Walter only escaping the same fate in consequence of his being in holy orders.†

A. D. 1332.

Shortly after the new lord justice's arrival, articles were sent over by the king for the reformation of the state of Ireland.‡ It was not the fault, as we have seen, either of this monarch or of his predecessors, that the great benefits of English law had not been extended to the natives in general; and one of the ordinances now transmitted§ was framed with a view to this wise policy, being couched in the following terms:—"That one and the same law be observed to the Irish and the English;"—an exception being added, in the case of betages,§ who, like the English villain, were entirely in the power of their lords. But this royal mandate, like all the rest, in the same liberal spirit, that had preceded it, was rendered null by the blind selfishness of the magnates to whom it was addressed. Another of these ordinances was directed against that standing evil, absenteeism.

The public announcement at this time, by the king, of his intention to pass over into Ireland,‖ and apply himself personally to the task of reforming the state of that realm, might well be classed with those other dawnings of better fortune which now and then opened upon hapless Ireland, merely to close again in darkness were it not manifest that all the preparations made ostensibly for the king's Irish visit were but as a blind, to divert attention from the formidable expedition then preparing against Scotland. But, although the advantage of the king's presence was lost to the Irish,¶ the very steps taken in contemplation of his visit were such as, by quickening the zeal of the subordinate authorities, and directing their attention to abuses likely to be sifted, could not fail to be of at least temporary service. Thus, among other politic measures, it was commanded that all persons possessing lands in Ireland should repair thither for the advantage and defence of that kingdom; and likewise that search should be made through the king's records, to learn what steps had been taken for the amendment of the state of the Irish.**

A. D. 1331. to 1332.

The king had sent writs to the earl of Ulster and other great lords, announcing his intention of coming; and his summons to the absentees, dated January 28th, 1332, requiring them to accompany him, and recover their possessions out of the hands of the rebels, is addressed to Thomas, earl of Norfolk, and twenty-two other English lords and gentlemen. But the secret scheme which had been all this time maturing against Scotland was now ripe for execution; and the mask he had worn towards both countries might with impunity be cast aside. All the supplies, therefore, that had been granted for his pacific visit to Ireland, he, without any scruple, appropriated to his memorable Scot-

* Annal. Hibern. † Hanmer.—Marleburrough's Chronicle.

‡ Prynne, 267.—Cox.

§ "Quod una et eadem lex fiat tam Hibernicis quam Anglicis; excepta servitute Betagiorum, penes dominos suos, eodem modo quo usitatum est in Anglia de Villanis." The term *Betage* is thus explained by Harris:—"It would seem to appear that *villains, natives, originaries* or *original tenants*, and *betages* import much the same thing; and that the *English villain* and *Irish betagh* is the same person."—Ware, *Antiquities, &c.*, chap 20.

‖ Rymer, "De Passagio Regis in Hiberniam meditato," t. iv. p. 503.

¶ Rymer, "De Passagio Regis ad partes Hiberniæ prorogato," tom. iv. p. 523. ** Cox.

tish warfare; and found, in the brilliant victory at Halidon Hill, a result far more suited to his chivalrous tastes than any that the precious, but slow and remote, triumphs of the legislator could furnish.

The only measure which appears to have been taken by him towards the pacification of Ireland, was the issue of writs to the lord justice, and other public authorities, empowering them to admit to the king's peace all disaffected persons, as well English as Irish, upon such terms as the lord justice and his council should deem honourable and expedient.

In the month of June, this year, William de Burgh, the third earl of Ulster, was treacherously murdered near Carrickfergus by his own servants;—an event which, far more from the youth and exalted station of the particular victim, than from any rarity of such crimes, excited a strong and general sensation throughout the country.* One feature of savage life that marked this murder was the great number of persons engaged in it. The lord justice, we are told, on hastening to Carrickfergus to see the delinquents duly punished, found that the country people had anticipated his purpose, and killed 300 of the murderers and their abettors in one day. For a long time after the following clause used to be inserted in all pardons, "With the exception of the death of the late earl of Ulster."† A. D. 1333.

The young lord, who was thus cut off in his twenty-first year, left an only child, a daughter, the heiress of his great possessions, who was married, in the year 1352, to Lionel, third son of king Edward III. This prince was then created, in her right, earl of Ulster, and also lord of Connaught; and, after him, these titles and possessions were enjoyed, through marriage or descent, by different princes of the royal blood; until at length, in the person of Edward IV., they became the special inheritance and revenue of the English crown.

The usual process by which foreign settlers, in a country already well peopled, become by degrees intermixed and incorporated with the great mass of the population, and which, in all cases save that of Ireland, seems to have been regarded as a natural and salutary result, was, at the period where we are now arrived, in rapid progress among the Anglo-Irish; and in the instance of the powerful family of the De Burghs, received a more quickening impulse onward from motives of rapacity and ambition. Immediately on the earl's death, the chiefs of the junior branches of the family, then residing in Connaught, fearing the transfer of his large possessions into strange hands by the marriage of the heiress, took advantage of the opportunity now offered of seizing upon his estates; and the two most powerful of the family, sir William, or Ulick, the progenitor of the earls of Clanricarde, and sir Edmond Albanach, the ancestor of the earls of Mayo, having confederated together, and declared themselves independent, took possession of the entire territory;—the town of Galway, together with the country as far as the Shannon, falling to the lot of sir William. Still more to enlist the sympathy of the natives on their side, they renounced the English dress and language, and adopted those of the country; carrying the metamorphosis so far as even to change their names,—sir William taking the title of Mac William Eighter, and sir Edmond that of Mac William Oughter.‡

The example set by these "degenerate English," as they came to be styled, began, from this period, to be, very extensively followed. Among the inferior branches of the De Burgh family, one named itself Mac Hubbard, and another Mac David. Similar instances of degeneracy, or rather defection, became common throughout the whole kingdom; and the frequent occurrence of the words "English rebels" in the legal records of this reign shows that disaffection to the crown was now no longer confined to mere "Irish enemies."

In the spring of this year, the earl of Desmond, after having been imprisoned in the castle of Dublin for more than eighteen months, was released from his confinement; and, in a parliament held soon after, almost all the chief noblemen of the land engaged them-

* The following particulars of this murder are given by Lodge:—"He was murdered on Sunday, June 6, 1333, by Robert Fitz-Richard Mandeville (who gave him his first wound,) and others his servants, near to the Fords, in going towards Carrickfergus, in the 21st year of his age, at the instigation, as was said, of Gyle de Burgh, wife of sir Richard Mandeville, in revenge for his having imprisoned her brother Walter and others."

† In some of these charters of pardon, the crime of adherence to the Scottish enemies is coupled, as an exception, with that of the murder of the earl of Ulster:—"Morte nup'er com' Ulton. et adherencia Scotis inimicis except."

‡ Hardiman's *History of Galway*.—"In the same province," says sir John Davies, "Bremingham, baron of Athenry, called himself Mac Yoris; Dexecester, or De'exon, was called Mac Jordan; Mangle, or De Angulo, took the name of Mac Costello. In Munster, of the great families of the Geraldines planted there, one was called Mac Morice, chief of the house of Lixnaw, and another Mac Gibbon, who was also called the White Knight. The chief of the baron of Dunboyne's house, who is a branch of the house of Ormond, took the surname of Mac Pheris."

selves and their estates as surety for his future fealty. We find him summoned also to attend the king, in his expedition into Scotland; and a writ of liberate, dated Drogheda, 1336,* shows that he then received 100*l.* for the expenses he had incurred in bringing his men at arms, hobellars and foot-soldiers, from different parts of Leinster to Drogheda, and there waiting a whole month for shipping to convey them to Scotland.

From a grant made at this time, of estates in England, to Matilda, countess of Ulster, the widow of the late murdered earl, it appears that this lady having felt a very natural dread of visiting Ireland, and no returns from her Irish possessions having been received by her, the government had taken all her castles, lands, and tenements there into their own hands, and assigned for her dowry estates of equal value in England.†

No event much worthy of notice occurs in the records of the few following years; with the doubtful exception of a most marvellous victory gained by the English over the natives in Connaught, in which, with the loss to themselves, as it is said, of but one man, they slew, 10,000 of the enemy;‡ thus bearing, in its result, a suspicious resemblance to two of the great battle-fields of this reign,—Crecy, and Halidon Hill.§

In the year 1339, the Irish were again up in arms, throughout the whole kingdom; more especially, as usual, in Munster, where the earl of Desmond, attacking the insurgents of Kerry, slew 1200 of their force, and took prisoner Maurice Fitz-Nicholas,‖ fourth lord of Kerry, who had joined the ranks of the Irish, and, being now cast into prison by Desmond, there ended his days.¶ This nobleman had, in the year 1325, been tried and attainted by the Irish parliament for a crime, the violent nature of which, as well as the remission of the capital punishment adjudged to it, mark significantly the lawless character of the times. Bearing a grudge, in consequence of some past dispute, to Desmond Mac Carthy, son and heir to Mac Carthy More, this lord attacked him, as he sat on the bench, in the court of assize, at Tralee, and laid him dead at the judge's feet.**

No less active against the Irish than Desmond, the earl of Kildare now attacked those of Leinster, pursuing the O'Dempsys†† so closely that many of them were drowned in the river Barrow; while a booty, richer, it is said, than had ever been taken in that country, was brought by the lord justice,—at that time Charlton, bishop of Hereford,—from Idrone, in the county of Carlow. In the same year, the chief governor just mentioned resigned his post to the prior of Kilmainham, Roger Outlaw, who now, for the fourth time, held that high office; but died at the beginning of the following year, having constituted Sir John Darcy lord justice of Ireland for life. But Darcy, unwilling, perhaps, to be made the instrument of measures so rigorous as those now about to be adopted, sent over as his deputy sir John Morris, a gentleman yet untried in the field of Irish politics.

The object of the policy about to be enforced by the king and his English advisers was, not merely to reduce, but, if possible, break up and disperse, that enormous mass of wealth and power which had been accumulated, in the course of nearly two centuries, by the descendants of the first English conquerors of Ireland; and the earliest intimation given by Edward of such a design had been during the administration of sir Anthony Lucy, in the Articles of Reform transmitted to that governor. In this instrument he had threatened that, if the great landholders were not more attentive to their duties, he would be compelled to take their lands and possessions into his own hands.‡‡ There was no attempt, probably, at that time, to carry this threat into execution, as we meet with no farther mention of it.

A. D. 1341. On the arrival, however, of the present lord justice, the very appointment of whom, a mere knight, was viewed as an insult by the great lords, it appeared that still more sweeping and arbitrary measures were about to be enforced against the old English; and among the first was a general resumption of all the lands, liberties, seignories, and jurisdictions that had been granted, in Ireland, not by Edward himself only, but by his father. In all cases, likewise, whether in his time or that of his predecessors, where debts due to the crown had been either remitted or suspended, it was now declared that all such indulgences were revoked, and that these debts must be strictly levied without any delay.§§ This rigorous measure he endeavoured to excuse by alleging

* Close Roll, 10 Ed. III. † Rymer, tom. v. ad ann. 1338.

‡ Marleburrough's Chronicle.

§ At Halidon Hill 30,000 of the Scots were killed; while there fell, on the English side, only 1 knight, 1 esquire, and 13 private soldiers. At Crecy, the disparity of loss was still more remarkable.

‖ Lodge.—According to Cox, he was named Nicholas Fitz-Maurice.

¶ Annal. Hibern. 'He was put in prison (says the annalist,) where he died for want of meat and drink for his allowance was but very little, because he had rebelled, with the Irish, against the king and the earl.'

** Lodge.

†† The O'Dempsys were one of the septs inhabiting the territory called anciently Hyfalgia, comprising a part of the county of Kildare, part of the King's County, and part of the Queen's County. Among the other septs composing this union were the O'Malones, O'Dalys, O'Mulloys, Mac Loghlin's, &c. &c.—Ware, *Antiq.*; Seward, *Topograph. Hibern.*

‡‡ Prynne, 267. §§ Ib. 272.

the necessity which he found himself under of providing for the expenses of the war just then renewed with France. Among the ordinances put forth by him, there were some for the correction of official abuses, more especially those of the king's exchequer,* which, had they not so openly formed a part of one fixed and general design to dislodge from its strongholds the ascendency of the Anglo-Irish, and plant in its place a purely English dominion, would have been welcomed as sound and rational reforms.

But, could any doubts have been entertained as to the real object of legislation, they must have been removed by an ordinance issued in this year,† wherein, addressing his justiciary, sir John Darcy, he declared that, whereas, it had appeared to him and his council that they would be better and more usefully served in Ireland by English officers having revenues and possessions in England than by Irish or English, married and possessing estates only in Ireland, he therefore ordered that his justiciary, after diligent inquiries, should remove all such officers as were married and held estates in Ireland, and replace them by fit Englishmen having lands, tenements, and benefices in England. A. D. 1342.

This open announcement of the royal purpose to exclude, in future, from all share in the government, the descendants of those who had conquered that realm, as well as of those who had ever since struggled to retain it, produced, as might have been expected, a burst of indignant feeling throughout the whole of the old English population. The jealousy long felt by the crown towards those great Anglo-Irish lords, whom its own reckless favours had nursed into such portentous strength, and who were now, comparatively, at least, with the king and his nobles, become the natural heads of the land, had already, in more than one instance, declared itself. But it was not until now that this feeling had found vent for itself in the law; or that the distinction between the two races, the English by blood and the English by birth, was resorted to as a reason or pretext for the sacrifice of the old colonists to the new. It was now too late, however, to think of dislodging an evil so long and so firmly entrenched; and the only effect of the unwise aggression was, to render the party attacked more sensible of their own power.

To allay the excitement caused by this measure, a parliament was summoned by the lord justice, to meet at Dublin in October; but the earl of Desmond, and the lords of his party, refused peremtorily to attend it; and, confederating with other great nobles, as well as some cities and corporations, they appointed, of themselves, without any reference to the head of the government, a general assembly to meet, in November, at Kilkenny. This convention, at which were present neither the lord justice nor any other of the king's officers, made itself memorable, not only by the peculiar circumstances under which it met, but also by a long and spirited petition to the king, which was the result of its deliberations, and which, though not expressly pretending to parliamentary authority, purports to be the act of the prelates, earls, barons, and commons of Ireland.‡ To understand clearly the complaints made by these petitioners of the encroachments, as they chose to consider them, of the natives, it must be borne in mind that, during the troubled reign of Edward II., and in the first years of the present, the Irish had succeeded, in more than one instance, in regaining possession of their ancient territories; and that the greater part of the lands of Leinster had been, for some time, in the hands of Mac Morrough and O'Moore, the descendants of the original princes of that province.§ A. D. 1342.

The petition, which is in old Norman French, begins by complaining that, in consequence of mal-administration and the unguarded state in which the country had been left, more than a third part of the lands conquered by the king's progenitors had been taken possession of by his Irish enemies; in consequence of which his liege English subjects had become so impoverished as to be even in want of the means of subsistence. The great castles and fortresses which, while held by the crown, formed the safeguards of the land, were now in the possession of the Irish; chiefly, as the petitioners allege, through the misconduct of the king's treasurers, who had delayed, and frequently embezzled the

* Prynne, 274, 275. † Close Roll, 15 Ed. III. See Prynne, p. 274. ‡ Pyrnne, 279.

§ Baron Finglas, *Breviate of Ireland*. It was about the beginning of Edward the Second's reign that this resumption of the lands of Leinster took place. The English lord who then held the territory of Ley having appointed one of the O'Moores to be his captain of war in that territory, this chief took possession of the country for himself,—"de servo dominus, de subjecto princeps effectus," as friar Clynne states it. And a similar appointment, about the same time, enabled Mac Morrough, the captain or chief of the Cavenaghs, to possess himself of the county of Carlow, and of the greater part of the county of Wexford.—See *Davies*, p. 194.

pay of the constables and warders. The castles of Roscommon, Rathdown, Athlone, and Bunratty had, from this and other causes, been abandoned to the enemy.

After a number of other such charges against the officers of the royal exchequer, accusing them of fraud and overreaching in almost all their transactions, and praying of the king to apply a remedy to these evils, they proceed to notice the grasping covetousness of his ministers, in holding each a number of lucrative posts; and entreat that in future none should be allowed to hold more than one office.* But the late order issued by the king, for the resumption of all grants made in Ireland by himself and his royal progenitors, was naturally the grievance on which their resentments and recollections were most alive. Recalling to his mind the gallant devotion of his liege English of Ireland, when, at their own cost, they joined the banner of his royal ancestor, in the wars of Gascony, Scotland, and Wales, they contrasted this devotion with the conduct of the English, who had been sent over to rule them, and who, wanting in means or resources of their own, and wholly ignorant of the country, came but to enrich themselves dishonourably at the expense of a people whom they misgoverned. "In return sire," say they, "for trusty and loyal services, you and your progenitors granted to divers English people of this realm lands, tenements, franchises, and remissions of debt, of which, by virtue of your charters, they have long remained in quiet possession. But now, sire, your ministers inform us that, by a late mandate from England, all these royal gifts and grants have been revoked." This act they calmly, but firmly, pronounce to be unjust and contrary to reason; as neither by their ancestors nor by themselves had their claim to the favours of the crown been ever forfeited: and they therefore pray of the king that, according to the provisions of the Great Charter, they may not be ousted of their freehold without being called in judgment.†

There are yet a number of other abuses and grievances complained of by them,—such as the seizure of lands by the king's escheators, merely for the sake of the fee they received on again restoring them; the great hardship of persons indicted for felonies, in Ireland, being compelled to appear and answer for them before the king in England; the seizure of victuals and carriages by the king's ministers, on their own sole authority, and without paying any money for them. On these, and some other subjects of complaint, the petitioners pray of the king to institute searching inquiries, and apply just and prompt remedies.

Of the nature of the answer returned by Edward to this earnest remonstrance we are left in entire ignorance; the only notice of it that appears to be extant being found in a writ addressed by him to the remonstrants;‡ wherein, acknowledging, in most gracious terms, the receipt of their petition, he acquaints them that his answer to its several prayers had been sent under the great seal to John March the chancellor, and Thomas de Wogan. He concludes this writ by informing them of his intention to pass into France with a large force, and asking their aid towards his expedition.

A. D. 1343. In the same year, sir Ralph Ufford, who had married the countess dowager of Ulster, was appointed to the office of lord justice; and, by his harsh and rigorous measures, made himself so odious throughout the country, that the long course of tempestuous weather which happened to prevail during his administration, was, by the superstition of the people, laid to his charge.§ The first act of this lord justice's government was to put down the aspiring pretensions of Desmond, who, assuming his former attitude of defiance, had refused to attend a parliament summoned by Ufford, at Dublin and appointed an assembly of his own friends and confederates, at the town of Callan.

A. D. 1345. But the new governor, by his determined conduct, defeated this bold design. The other great lords of Desmond's party, on being prohibited by the king's writ, declined their leader's soummons; while, at the same time, the lord justice, marching a force into Munster, seized on that earl's lands, and farmed them out at a rent payable yearly to the king. Getting possession also, by stratagem, of the castles of Iniskelly and Island, he hanged three knights, sir Eustace Poer, sir William Grant, and Sir John Cottrel, who had held the command of them, and against whom the charge was that they had practised the grievous and foreign exaction of coyne and livery.‖

* "Ensement, sire, pur ces qe vos ministres Dirlaund embrassont plusours offices de pur covetisie daver multz des foes, voillez sire pur vostre profit ordiner, qe nul de vos ministres illoeqes ne eyt qe un office soulement."

† "Pur quei sire vous pleise ordiner, qe eux ne soient ostæz de lour franc tenementz sanz estre appele en jugement, comela Grande Chartre voet."

‡ Close Roll, 16 Ed. III. § Annal. Hibern.

‖ By the taxes called coyne and livery, was meant food and entertainment for the soldiers and forage for the horses. It was the opinion of Spenser, that great injustice was done to the Irish landlords by the prohibition of the custom called coigny or coyne; "for all their tenants (he says) being commonly but tenants at will, they use to take of them what victuals they list; for of victuals they were wont to make small

In consequence of these strong measures, Desmond surrendered himself to the lord justice, and was let to bail on the recognizances of the earls of Ulster and Ormond, and four and twenty knights. But as (through fear, it is supposed, of the severity of the lord justice) he failed to appear, according to the condition of the recognizance, his sureties were left to answer for his unworthy default, whereby eighteen of the knights lost their estates and were utterly ruined.*

While thus successful in curbing and humbling the proud Desmond, Ufford was equally fortunate in his proceedings against the other great leader of the Anglo-Irish, Thomas, earl of Kildare; though the means employed by him for this object present such a train of mean and elaborate perfidy as no success, however important, should be suffered to sanction or excuse. Under the pretence of summoning Kildare to join the monarch with his forces, sir William Burton was sent into Munster, with two writs,—one containing the royal summons, and the other secretly empowering sir William to seize and imprison the earl. So quickly, however, on Kildare's announcement of the king's summons, did his followers crowd to the royal standard, that to produce the secret writ, with any hope of being able to execute it, would have been a worse than vain attempt. In this difficulty, the only resource left to the treacherous envoy, was that of prevailing upon the earl to suspend his levy of troops until he should have consulted with the king's council. To this proposal Kildare unsuspectingly assented; and having accompanied sir William to Dublin, for the pretended purpose, was there, while consulting with the council, in the exchequer, suddenly arrested and thrown into prison.†

In the month of April, this year, the administration of Sir Ralph Ufford, was brought to a close, by his death,—leaving behind, as we are told, one general feeling of abhorrence for his memory. Nor had this odium, in his case, been compensated by any of those worldly advantages which too often wait on a life of oppression and rapine, as he died in necessitous circumstances; and his lady, says the chronicler, who had been received like an empress, and lived like a queen, was obliged to steal away through a postern gate of the castle to avoid the curses of her enemies and the clamour of her creditors. Such are the portraits given in our annals of these two unpopular personages; but with every appearance, however, of having been exaggerated and over-coloured by party malice. Coming on a mission so odious and formidable to the fierce oligarchs of the realm, and carrying his measures with such a high hand as even the king himself shrunk from enforcing, it was, perhaps, fortunate for Ufford to be thus rescued, even by death, from the storm of hatred and persecution that would have assailed him on his retirement. The whole period of Ufford's government did not extend beyond a year and nine months; and the state of poverty, in which he is said to have died, seems rather inconsistent with the course of extortion and peculation attributed to him. A. D. 1346.

There was now a succession of no less than three chief governors in the short space of two months, under one of whom, sir John Morris, the earl of Kildare, who had been kept arbitrarily for nearly a year in prison, was, on the recognizance of twenty-four lords and gentlemen, released from confinement.

By a similar act of graciousness, and through the interposition of sir Walter Bermingham, then lord justice, Desmond was permitted to proceed to England, to lay his complaints at the foot of the throne; and was not only graciously received, but, in prosecuting his claims for redress of the wrongs inflicted upon him by Ufford, was allowed twenty shillings *per diem* for his expenses, by the king. All the estates, too, of those who had become bound for him, while in prison, were by letters patent restored to them.‡

In the year 1344, on the renewal of hostilities with France, the king had addressed a writ to the magnates of Ireland, summoning them to join him with their forces;§ and, in the present year, the earl of Kildare went with thirty men at arms and forty hobilliers,‖ to serve the king, at the siege of Calais, where, for his gallant conduct, Edward bestowed upon him the honour of knighthood. A. D. 1347.

There now ensued a period of tranquillity, for some years, such as rarely the course of our annals presents; and the causes assigned for this unusual calm, namely the favour extended by Edward to the two popular Anglo-Irish lords, and the daily expectation of

reckoning. Neither in this was the tenant wronged, for it was an ordinary and known custom, and his lord commonly used so to covenant with him, which if at any time the tenant disliked, he might freely depart at his pleasure. But now, by this statute, the said Irish lord is wronged, for that he is cut off from his customary services."—*View of the State of Ireland.*

* Cox.—For the names of Desmond's mainprisers, see Annal. Hibern. ad ann. 1345.

† Annal. Hibern.

‡ Annal. Hibern.—Cox.

§ Rymer, tom. v. p. 417

‖ Rymer, tom. v. p. 544.

seeing the resumed lands and jurisdictions restored, show in what quarter the active elements of political strife and disorder principally lay. During this period the office of lord justice was filled by five or six successive personages; of one of whom, sir Thomas Rokeby, a homely saying is recorded, characteristic, we are told, of the simple and sound integrity of the man. When reproached by some one for suffering himself to be served in wooden cups, he answered, "I had rather drink out of wood and pay gold and A. D. 1353. silver, than drink out of gold and make wooden payment."* It was during Rokeby's second administration, as far as any certainty on the point can be attained, that the crown, after a short and vain struggle against the power it had itself created, thought fit to restore all the estates and jurisdictions which it had resumed.†

So well had Desmond succeeded in ingratiating himself with the king, that he was now thought worthy not only of being entrusted with the government of Ireland, but A. D. 1355. of holding that high and responsible office for life. He survived but five months, however, to enjoy this honour; and, dying in the castle of Dublin, was taken from thence and interred in the church of the Friars Preachers at Tralee.

In the time of his successor, sir Thomas Rokeby, who resumed, on his death, the helm of the state, an important writ was issued, ordering that, for the future, the parliament of Ireland should take cognizance of erroneous proceedings in the king's courts of that country, instead of, as hitherto, putting the subject to the trouble and expense of prosecuting a writ or error in England.‡ This useful reform was followed, at an interval of about two years, by a series of ordinances, most of them equally judicious and useful in their several provisions, for the better government of the church and state in Ireland, and the maintenance of the English laws and statutes established in that realm.§

Among the offences and abuses denounced in these ordinances are, the intermarriage and fostering of the English with the Irish; the depredations committed by the kerns, or idle men; the manifold extortions and oppressions practised by the king's officers, more especially those of the exchequer and court of wards. In reference to the recent dissensions between the old and new English, the ordinance enjoins that, in every such case, the lord justice shall, after diligent inquiry into all the circumstances of the feud, cause due process to be served on the delinquents; and shall, on conviction, punish them by imprisonment, severe fines, or other such just infliction.

During the administration of James, earl of Ormond, who, from his being the grandson of king Edward I., was styled, usually, "the noble earl," a considerable advance was made in that sure system of warfare against the Irish, which needed no weapons for its purpose, but those which the law so readily supplied, by the issue of a mandate ordering that no "mere Irishman" should be made a mayor, or bailiff, or other officer of any town within the English dominion; nor be received, through any motives of consanguinity, affinity, or other causes, into holy orders, nor be advanced to any ecclesiastical benefice or promotion.‖ A modification of this severe edict took place in the following year, when the king explained, by his writ, that it was not meant to extend to any Irish clerks who had done him service, or given proofs of their loyalty.

The earl of Ormond having been called, for a short time, to England, the office of lord justice was mean while held by Maurice Fitz-Gerald, earl of Kildare, with the usual salary of 500*l. per annum*, out of which he had to maintain nineteen horsemen besides himself.¶

In the following year, the important announcement was made to both countries, of the king's intention to send, as deputy to Ireland, his third son, Lionel, duke of A. D. 1361. Clarence. This young prince, who married the daughter, as we have seen, of the late William, earl of Ulster, had become, in her right, possessed of that earldom, together with the lordship of Connaught; and, as the maintenance of the king's power in Ireland was now the common cause of all who held possessions in that kingdom, Edward summoned all such persons to appear before him and his council, either personally or by proxy, and concert measures for the preservation and defence of that realm.

* Campion, *Historie*, &c.—Holinshed.

† In the case of James, earl of Ormond, the restitution took place much earlier, as the king, in consideration of this earl's consanguinity to himself, restored to him the palatinate of Tipperary, in the year 1328.—Carte's *History of the Life of the Duke of Ormonde*, Introduct.

‡ Close Roll, 29 Ed. III. See Prynne, p. 286.

§ Ordinatio de Statu Hibern., cited by Prynne (p. 287.,) out of the Statute Roll in the Tower.

‖ Rymer. t. vi. 326. This memorable mandate well merits to be given at full length—"Quod nullus merè Hibernicus, de nationè Hibernicâ existens, fiat Major, ballivus, janitor aut alius officiarius seu minister in aliquo loco nobis subjecto. Nec quod aliquis archiepiscopus, episcopus, abbas, prior, aut aliquis alius ad fidem nostram existens, sub forisfactura omnium quæ nobis forisfacere poeset, aliquem merè Hibernicum, de nationè Hibernicâ, ut præmittitur, existentem, causâ consanguinitatis, affinitatis, aut alio modo quocunque, in canonicum recipiat, vel ad aliquod beneficium ecclesiasticum inter Anglicos promoveat vel admittat."

¶ Prynne, p. 295.

The causes assigned, in the king's writ, for the state of affairs they are called upon to remedy, are, first, the increased violence of the incursions of the Irish enemy; next, the inability of his loyal subjects to make head against these aggressions; and, lastly, the absence of so many great English proprietors, who drew all they could from their Irish estates, but took no trouble whatever for their defence.* Among the absentees required to contribute, on this occasion, to the raising of a military force, are found, Maria, countess of Norfolk, Agnes, countess of Pembroke, Margery de Roos, Anna le Despenser, and several other great ladies.

The result that followed on all this show of preparation was by no means worthy either of the occasion or the effort; as an army consisting of but fifteen hundred men was the whole of the force with which Lionel proceeded to Ireland, having under him Ralph, earl of Stafford, James, earl of Ormond, sir John Carew, sir William Windsor, and other distinguished knights.

Although, in more judicious hands, a force even thus small might have been rendered efficient by a skilful mode of employing it,—especially if seconded by a system of policy at once firm and conciliatory,—no such prosperous results were to be looked for from a leader like the young duke, who, besides his inexperience, carried too openly with him into his new sphere of power all those prejudices against the old English settlers which were then so prevalent among his countrymen, and which, in a land already convulsed by faction, had opened lately a new and ominous chasm of strife. In order to enable him, in his Irish wars, to dispense with the assistance of the old English altogether, it was ordered by proclamation, before his departure, that all who held lands in Ireland should, on pain of forfeiture of their possessions, repair thither with all the force they could raise; and he caused it now, with still more direct avowal of his object, to be proclaimed that none of the old English inhabitants should be allowed to join his army, or even approach his camp.†

This open and deliberate insult to those who were the progeny of the first conquerors of the land, and who had, themselves, fought and toiled to preserve it, could not fail to be deeply and indignantly resented; and, had so rash a course of policy been persevered in, the realm would have been lost most probably to both of the usurping parties. The young prince, however, was soon made sensible of the mischievous consequences of such conduct. The insurgents of Munster being those whose ravages were found most harassing to the English province, the first measure of the royal duke was to march his army against O'Brian of Thomond. But, being unacquainted with the local bearings of the country, and having no guides or means of intelligence, he lost, in this ill-advised expedition, a great number of his troops. Perceiving how hopeless, therefore, was any endeavour to dispense with the aid of the Anglo-Irish, he hastened to retrieve his rash outset by the issue of a second proclamation, inviting and requiring them to join his standard without farther delay. As they were themselves too deeply interested in the success of his arms to regard punctilio in such an emergency, they readily ranged themselves under his banner, and the result of their union was the total dispersion of the Munster chieftain's force.

Returning to Dublin after this success, the prince conferred the honour of knighthood upon many of his followers, both of the new and the old English race. He likewise removed the exchequer to Carlow, and expended 500*l.* on the walling of that town; by which, and a few other acts of the same nature, he so far pleased the country in general that both clergy and laity concurred in granting to him two years' revenue of all their lands and tithes, towards the maintenance of the Irish war. To this prince is also attributed, the merit of having been the first who kept the army in any tolerable state of discipline, and prevented them from being, as heretofore, a grevious burden to the community.

After having held, for nearly three years, the office of lord lieutenant, the duke of Clarence returned to England, without having gained in that time a single important advantage over the natives, or enlarged the scanty boundaries of the English power. A. D. 1364.

In the course of the three following years we find him twice again entrusted with the same office; though on both occasions for a very limited period. It was during his last administration, in the year 1367, that the memorable parliament was held at Kilkenny, in which the two estates, as we are told, sat together,‡ and which A. D. 1367.

* "Commodum dictarum terrarum suarum ab eadem terra capiunt, et defensionem aliquam non faciunt."—*Close Roll*, 36 Ed. III.

† Cox.

‡ "The opinion," says Dr. Lingard, speaking of this reign, "that the several estates sate and voted together, derives no support from the language of the rolls."

passed the celebrated act known generally by the name of the Statute of Kilkenny. This remarkable ordinance, though directed chiefly against those old English, or, more properly, Anglo-Irish, who had adopted the laws and customs of the natives, contains also, in reference to the latter, some enactments full of that jealous and penal spirit which continued for centuries after to pervade and infect the whole course of English legislation respecting Ireland. The following are the principal provisions of this statute:—That intermarriages with the natives, or any connexion with them in the way of fostering or gossipred,* should be considered and punished as high treason:—that any man of English race, assuming an Irish name, or using the Irish language, apparel, or customs, should forfeit all his lands and tenements:—that to adopt or submit to the Brehon law was treason:—that without the permission of the government, the English should not make war upon the natives:—that the English should not permit the Irish to pasture or graze upon their lands, nor admit them to any ecclesiastical benefices or religious houses, nor entertain their minstrels, rhymers, or news-tellers. There were also enactments against the oppressive tax of coyne and livery; against the improper use made of royal franchises and liberties in allowing them to be sanctuaries for malefactors, and one or two other such manifest abuses.

It can hardly be necessary to direct attention to the cruel and iniquitous spirit of some of these items. While all of the lower classes of Irish are prohibited from pasturage within the English limits,—almost the only employment which the backward state of their agriculture then afforded,—all the better ranks are entirely excluded from that great road to wealth and honour, the church; and thus both classes are alike subjected to one common ban of exclusion and proscription, as if wholly unworthy to live or consort with their fellow men.

Such arbitrary measures are, in general, for the time, efficacious, whatever reaction their insolent defiance of the laws of nature and justice must ultimately provoke. Combined with the presence of the royal governor, so calming an effect did this rigorous statute produce, that from thenceforth the king's writ ran in Ulster and Connaught, and the revenues of both those provinces were regularly accounted for in the exchequer.†

Throughout the remainder of this long reign, there occur few events deserving of more than a cursory notice. After closing, satisfactorily, the session of his parliament, the duke of Clarence returned to England, and was succeeded in his office by Gerald, earl of Desmond, called, from his skill in writing verses, the Poet who, in the year 1369, gave place to sir William de Windsor. During the government of this lord lieutenant,—

A. D. 1369. or *custos*, as we find him styled,—the unusual tranquillity which had for some time prevailed was suddenly interrupted by a rising of the O'Tooles and other rebels of Leinster. Having attacked them with complete success, De Windsor was following up his advantage, when suddenly he found his attention called away to another quarter, by an event, distressing alike both on public and private grounds. A sanguinary affray had just taken place in the county of Limerick, near the the monastery

A. D. 1370. of Mayo, in which O'Connor and O'Brian, getting the better of their English antagonists, had slain the earl of Desmond, and taken John Fitz-Nicholas, lord of Kerry, and the lord Thomas Fitz-John, prisoners.‡ No time, therefore, was to be lost in marching to the defence of Munster; and the lord lieutenant, by a prompt and decisive movement, prevented any farther spread of the revolt.

Some arbitrary acts are recorded of this chief governor, which deserve notice, as being characteristic of those times. In the year 1370, when a parliament was held by him in Dublin, the two knights elected for Louth county were cast into prison by him for refusing to grant a subsidy; and in the following year, having convoked a parliament at Baldoyle, a place where there were no buildings except a small chapel, he assigned as his reason for this inconvenient arrangement, that the commons, finding themselves so ill lodged and entertained in that town, would be the sooner disposed to grant the required subsidies.§

* For the abuses of the tie of gossipred, or compaternity, in Ireland, see Davies, Spenser, sir James Ware, &c. &c. The practice of *fostering* was also complained of as tending to produce those ties and relationships with the native Irish, which it was the great object of the English legislators to intercept and prevent. The warm-heartedness, however, of the people they had to deal with, baffled, in this, as in many other such anti-social schemes, all their unnatural contrivances. "*Fostering*," says Davies, "hath always been a stronger alliance than blood; and the foster-children do love and are beloved of their foster fathers and their sept more than of their own natural parents and kindred; and do participate of their means more frankly, and do adhere unto them in all fortunes, with more affection and constancy."

† Cox—Davies.

‡ Holinshed—Annal. Hibern.—Mac Geoghegan. According to Lodge and Lynch, Gerald, the fourth earl of Desmond, lived for more than twenty years after the period assigned by the chroniclers for his murder.

§ Lynch (*Legislative Institutions, &c.*,) who cites as his authority, Original Inquisitions in the Tower of London.

The trite and true maxim, that "moral wrong brings with it its own punishment," needs no more striking illustration than the page of Irish history furnishes, in all that hideous harvest of hate and revolt which the English satraps of Ireland were now reaping as the natural product of their own rapacity and misrule. Even in those objects of which the attainment depends, in general, on mere force, so completely had their grasping views been hitherto baffled, that of all the fruits of their boasted "conquest," there remained subject to them, at the time we are now treating of, only the four shires of the English Pale;*—all the other parts of Ireland, including as well their Anglo-Irish as their native population, having fallen away from the crown of England.† A proof of the progress made by the Irish "rebels," as they were styled, in recovering their own patrimonial lands, is afforded in a writ issued at this time by the king, in consequence of a petition addressed to him by the English settlers, praying for relief from the payment of scutage "on all those lands of which the Irish enemy had despoiled them."‡ A. D. 1373.

In a country thus circumstanced, the office of chief governor, however alluring it might have been in the first palmy days of plunder and usurpation, had now become so arduous and undesirable a post, that sir Richard Pembridge, one of the king's servants, and warden of the Cinque Ports, on being ordered to go over to Ireland as lord justice, positively refused. Nor was his refusal, however ungracious, adjudged to be illegal; it being held that even so high an appointment, in Ireland, was no better than an honourable exile, and that no man could be forced by law to abandon his country, except in the case of abjuration for felony, or by act of parliament.§ The king sent over, therefore, in his stead, sir William de Windsor, already once before lord lieutenant, who undertook to carry on the government for 11,213*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* per annum,—a sum exceeding (says sir John Davies) the whole revenue of the realm of Ireland, which did not at that time amount to 10,000*l.* annually, "even though the medium," he adds, "be taken from the best seven years during this long reign." By De Windsor an order was obtained from the king and council, that all those who had lands in Ireland should repair thither without delay, or else send in their place men competent to defend the country, under pain of forfeiting their estates. Notwithstanding, however, all this preparation, so little had the government of that kingdom to do with the Irish people, that, according to De Windsor's own confession, he had never, during the whole course of his service there, been able to get access to the natives, or even discover their secluded places of abode. A. D. 1374.

The successor of De Windsor in the office of lord justice was James, the second earl of Ormond, under whom a parliament was called to provide for the exigencies of the government, but refused to grant the supplies. In this emergency writs were issued to the bishops and the commons, requiring them to choose representatives to be sent to the parliament of England,‖—there to treat, consult, and agree with the king and his council on the measures necessary for the support and safety of the government of Ireland. In complying, reluctantly, with this order of the crown, the clergy, nobles and commons declare that, according to the rights, laws, and customs of the land of Ireland, from the time of the conquest thereof, they never had been bound to elect or send any persons out of the said land to parliaments or councils held in England, for any such purposes as the writ requires.¶ A. D. 1376.

The same sort of struggle between the civil and ecclesiastical judicatures, as had been maintained so long in England, and the same unceasing demands and exactions on the part of the pope, under the various forms of Peter's pence, first fruits, and other such papal taxes,** were experienced likewise, during this century, in Ireland. In the reign

* It seems by no means certain at what period the territory occupied by the English colonies began to be distinguished by the appellation of "the Pale;" but it is generally supposed to have been about the time we are now approaching.

† Davies. ‡ Close Roll, 46 Ed. III. See Prynne, 302. § Cox.

‖ Prynne, p. 305. According to Prynne, it was not to the parliament but to the king's council, that these representatives, or rather commissioners, were summoned, in the same manner as the Scottish "Community" elected commissioners to repair to England in the thirty-third year of the reign of Edward I.—See Ryley, *Placit. Parliament*, p. 242, 243.

¶ A similar case occurred in the thirty-third year of Edward I., when persons were elected by the respective counties, cities, and boroughs in Ireland,—whether as members of parliament or commissioners, is a point disputed,—to repair to England, for the purpose of consulting respecting Irish affairs. It is allowed, indeed, by Molyneux,—rather injuriously to his general argument,—that through the greater part of the reigns of the three Edwards, representatives from Ireland came over to sit in the English parliament.

** For an account of these different taxes, see Lingard, *Hist. of England*, chap. xix. "In the obstinacy," says Dr. Lingard, "with which the court of Rome urged the exercise of these obnoxious claims, it is difficult to discover any traces of that political wisdom for which it has been celebrated. Its conduct tended to loosen the ties which bound the people to the head of their church, to nourish a spirit of opposition to his authority, and to create a willingness to listen to the declamations and adopt the opinions of religious innovator."

of Henry III., we find the pope's nuncio, master Stephen, sent to demand of both clergy and laity, in England, Ireland, and Wales, no less than a tenth of all their moveables, for the maintenance of the struggle his holiness was then engaged in with the emperor Frederick;* and, at different intervals during the same reign, two other papal legates, Petrus de Supino and Johannes Rufus, extorted from Ireland the value of the twentieth part of the land, and sums of money amounting to 7500 marks.† In the time of De Londres, archbishop of Dublin, so daring had been the encroachments of the spiritual authority, that the king, notwithstanding that prelate's high character and services, was forced to issue a writ, reprehending strongly his conduct, and threatening measures still more severe, should he persist in such practices.‡

What with the exactions, indeed, of the pope's agents on one side, and the frequent, and pressing demands of the crown on the other, the laity of both kingdoms were allowed little rest from extortion. The ready aid, too, which these great drainers of the public purse generally lent to each other's fiscal enterprises, rendered their hold on its contents more stringent and sure. Thus, in the thirteenth year of the reign of Edward I., the pope made a grant to that king of the tenth of all ecclesiastical revenues in Ireland, and this was followed soon after by a grant of a fifteenth from the temporalty.§

An event which occurred in the nineteenth year of Edward III., shows to what aspiring heights, even under a prince so powerful, the haughty churchmen of this period carried the pretensions of their order. The king had obtained a vote from parliament, for the grant of a subsidy, to be levied on church lands, as well as on those of the laity. But the archbishop of Cashel, Ralph Kelly, a native of Ireland, resolved to oppose the levying of this subsidy within his province; and, being supported by his suffragans of Limerick, Emly, and Lismore, issued a decree that all beneficed clergymen who contributed to this subsidy should, by the very act, be deprived of their benefices, and rendered incapable of future preferment within that province. Such of their lay tenants, also, as contributed, were to be excommunicated, and their descendants, to the third generation, excluded from holy orders. To give more solemnity to these decrees, the archbishop, attended by the other prelates, and all dressed in their pontifical robes presented themselves in the streets of Clonmell, and there solemnly pronounced an excommunication upon the king's commissioner of revenue, and upon all persons concerned in advising, contributing to, or levying the subsidy.‖

For this daring conduct, informations were exhibited against the prelates; who pleaded, in their defence, *Magna Charta*,—by which it was provided, they said, that the church should be free, and that all who violated its immunities should be punished with excommunication. The cause was given against the archbishop and his confederates; but these sturdy lords refused to appear in arrest of judgement, and, as there occurs no farther mention of the transaction, obtained, in the end, we may conclude, a virtual triumph.

Much of the opposition thus shown to the government by the Irish clergy, proceeded, doubtless, from political divisions within the church itself;—as, even at that period, when all were of one faith, the church of the government and the church of the people, in Ireland, were almost as much separated from each other by difference in race, language, political feeling, and even ecclesiastical discipline, as they have been, at any period since, by difference in creeds. The attempt made by the synod of Cashel, in that year, to assimilate the Irish church, in its rites and discipline, to that of England, entirely failed of its object; and the native clergy and people continued to follow their own ecclesiastical rules, as if the decrees of that memorable synod had never been issued.¶ Disheartening as may be some of the conclusions too plainly deducible from this fact, it clearly shows at least, that the establishment of the reformed church, in that kingdom, was not the first or sole cause of the bitter hostility between its two races.

It was in the reign of the second Edward that a university was, for the first time, founded within the city of Dublin.** A bull had been obtained for this object, from pope Clement V., by John Lech, archbishop of Dublin; and the task of carrying it into effect devolved upon his successor, Alexander de Bicknor, by whom statutes for the government of the university were established.†† To all students frequenting this university,

* Mathew Paris, 483. † Mathew Paris, 961.
‡ Ware.—D'Alton's *Memoirs of the Archbishop of Dublin.* § Cox.
‖ Ware.—D'Alton. ¶ Lanigan. ** Ware's *Antiquities*, chap. xxxvii. sec. 3.
†† One of the rules laid down for the government of this projected seminary would be thought, at the present day, rather startlingly liberal:—"We ordain, also, that we and our successors may choose a secular regent in divinity, of any order of worship or religion whatsoever (*de quacumque religione,*) who may actually read lectures on the Bible, in our church of St. Patrick, without any contradiction or calumny from any person whatsoever."

which was founded in St. Patrick's cathedral, protection was extended by Edward III.;* and in the year 1364., his son Lionel, duke of Clarence, granted to the dean and chapter an acre of land at Stachallane, and the advowsons of the church, to provide for the payment of ten marks a-year to a person of the order of St. Augustine, to deliver a lecture upon divinity in the scholar's room.†

An ordinance passed by the English parliament, in the fifth year of this reign, "that there should be one and the same law for the Irish and the English," is frequently referred to in the once interesting controversy with which Molyneux, the friend of Locke, connected his name. There is also another inquiry bearing upon the same question, which has no less divided our historical antiquaries,—namely, at what period Ireland began to have a parliament of her own; and it seems to be agreed upon by the best authorities, that until the reign of Edward II., all the deliberative meetings held in that kingdom, by whatsoever name they may have been called, were rather general assemblies of the great men, than, properly, parliaments.‡ That they were sometimes considerable in numbers, as well as in rank, appears from a parliament of this description, held in the year 1302, at which were present no less than 156 persons; and in the following reign, a general assembly, or parliament, was convened, which, in addition to all the English nobility in Ireland, included likewise the four archbishops, ten bishops, the abbot of St. Thomas, the prior of Kilmainham, and the dean and chapter of Dublin. There were likewise present, on this ocasion, several great Irish lords, among whom are the following, and thus designated,—O'Hanlan, duke of Oriel, O'Donell, duke of Tyrconnel, O'Neill, duke of Tyrone.

Until the period when regular parliaments began to be held in Ireland, it was usual to transmit thither, from time to time, the laws made by the English legislature, to be there proclaimed, enrolled, and executed, as laws also of Ireland; and there can be little doubt that what was then styled a parliament in that kingdom, was no more than the summoning of the great men of the realm together, reading over to them the law or laws transmitted from England, and enjoining that they should obey them.§

Among the last notices, respecting Ireland, that occur in the records of this reign, a curious entry in the Issue Roll for the year 1376 may for its quiet significance deserve to be noticed:—Richard Dere and William Stapolyn came over to England to inform the king how very badly Ireland was governed. The king ordered them to be paid ten pounds for their trouble.‖

* The king, in granting the desired protection, declares strongly his sense of the benefit of such studies; adding that, by those who most cultivate them, morality and virtue are most cherished, and peace in the land best preserved.—*Patent Roll*, 32 Ed. III.

† *History and Antiquities of St. Patrik's Cathedral*, by William Monck Mason;—a most valuable contribution to our antiquarian literature.

‡ Speech of sir John Davies, when speaker of the Irish House of Commons, published by Leland, vol. ii. *Appendix*.

§ The mandate issued by Henry III., in transmitting to his Irish deputy, Richard de Burgh, the laws and charter of king John, shows how simple was, at that time, the process by which English statutes were made binding upon Ireland:—"Mandamus vobis firmiter præcipientes, quatenus certa die et loco faciatis venire coram vobis archiepiscopos, episcopos, abbates, priores, comites, et barones, milites et libere tenentes, et ballivos singulorum comitatuum, et coram eis publice legi faciatis Cartam domini J. Regis patris nostri..... et præcipiatis eis ex parte nostra, quod leges illas et consuetudines in Carta prædicta contentas de cætero firmiter teneant et observent."—*Close Roll*, 12 Hen. III.

‖ Issues of the Exchequer.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

RICHARD II.

Council of regency during the king's minority.—Act against absentees.—Commission of sir Nicholas Dagworth.—Edmund Mortimer, earl of March, appointed lord lieutenant—succeeded by his son, Roger Mortimer.—Government of Philip de Courtenay, the king's cousin—his oppression and exactions—is disposed of his office, and punished.—The king's favourite, Robert de Vere—is created successively marquis of Dublin and duke of Ireland—is invested by the king with the sovereignty of Ireland—ends his days in misery at Louvain. Duke of Gloucester accepts the office of lord lieutenant—his departure countermanded.—The king resolves on an expedition to Ireland—his supposed motives for this step.—Submission of the Irish chieftains—the king entertains them in Dublin—confers on them the honour of knighthood.—Salutary reforms commenced and projected by him—is obliged to return to England—commits the government to the young earl of March.—Revolt of the Irish chieftains on the king's departure.—The earl of March slain in a battle with the natives.—The king resolves on another expedition to Ireland—is accompanied by young Henry of Monmouth, afterwards Henry V.—Difficulties encountered by the royal army.—Mac Morough refuses to make submission.—The army distressed for provisions.—Unsuccessful parley with Mac Morough.—The king retreats to Dublin—receives intelligence of the landing of Henry of Bolingbroke—embarks with his army for Milford Haven.

The intention expressed, in a preceding chapter of this work, to pass rapidly over the reigns of the first English kings of Ireland, it has not been in my power to accomplish. Though wanting in almost every quality that lends grace and glory to history, this period of my narrative, I found, could hardly be thus despatched without doing injustice to the demands of the subject. It was, in fact, in these very times, and more especially during the reign of Edward III., that the foundations were laid of that monstrous system of misgovernment in Ireland, to which no parallel exists in the history of the whole civilized world;—its dark and towering iniquity having projected its shadow so far forward as even to the times immediately bordering upon our own.

Enough, however, has, I trust, been related of these few eventful reigns, to convey a clear notion of the spirit of the law and its administration during that period, as well as of the condition of the country, in consequence of that spirit; and likewise to show that, as great power may be administered without tyranny, so is it possible for enormous tyranny to exist without any real power.

On the death of Edward III., the crown devolved, without question or contest, to Richard of Bordeaux, son and heir of the Black Prince; and the young king being A. D. 1377. then but in his eleventh year, a council of regency was chosen, "in aid of the chancellor and treasurer," to conduct the affairs of the government, during the minority of the king.*

The first measure relating to Ireland which demands our attention, during this reign, was an act or ordinance against absenteeism,—one of the earliest as well as A. D. 1379. most permanent of the many grievances attendant on that country's anomalous position. By this measure,—the first ever enacted on the subject,† and passed by the parliament of England, in consequence of a petition from Ireland,—it was ordained that all who possessed lands, rents, or offices in that kingdom should forthwith repair thither and become residents, for the purpose of watching and defending them; or, in case

* Lingard.

† "Then was the first statute made against absentees."—*Davies*

they could allege any sufficient cause for their absence, they were then to send, or find in that country, responsible persons to act as their deputies, and defend their possessions; otherwise two thirds of their Irish revenues were to be contributed by them towards that object. Some exceptions were made to this law in favour of persons in the kings service, of students in the universities, and of those absent for reasonable causes, by special licence under the great seal of England; from all of whom there was only required, for the defence of the land, one third of the yearly profits of their estates. Another step taken with a view to reformation, was the appointment of sir Nicholas Dagworth to proceed to Ireland, furnished with instructions and powers to survey the possessions of the crown, and call to account the officers of the Irish revenue.*

About the same time leave was granted by the king, in consequence of a petition to that effect, for a free trade in "wines and other merchandises," between Ireland and Portugal.†

In the third year of Richard's reign, Edmund Mortimer, earl of March and Ulster, and son to Lionel, duke of Clarence, was sent over to Ireland as lord lieutenant; and, about the same time, a number of French and Spanish gallies, which had done much mischief on the coasts of Ireland, having been driven by the English fleet into the harbour of Kinsale, were there attacked, with much bravery, by a combined force of English and Irish, and sustained a complete defeat; their chief captains were all taken,‡ 400 of the sailors slain, and a great number of their barges captured. A. D. 1380.

On the death of the earl of March,§ in the second year of his government, the prelates, magnates, and commons of the realm were immediately summoned to meet at Cork for the purpose of electing a worthy successor to the vacant office;‖ and the choice falling unanimously upon John Colton, then chancellor of Ireland, this distinguished ecclesiastic, who became afterwards archbishop of Armagh, was raised to the post of lord justice. He remained, however, but a few weeks in this station, being succeeded, towards the end of January, by the young Roger, earl of March, son of the former lord lieutenant; and, this prince being still under age, the affairs of the realm were administered, in his name, by his guardian and uncle, Thomas Mortimer; so that, in Ireland, as well as in England, the executive power of the realm was, at this time, in tutelage. A. D. 1381. A. D. 1382.

The laudable desire evinced by the council of regency, at the outset of Richard's reign, for a searching inquiry into the administration of Irish affairs, and a vigorous reform of the abuses prevailing in all its departments, was now farther shown by the firmness of their measures against Philip de Courtenay, cousin of the king, who had succeeded the young earl of March as lord lieutenant. Being the possessor of a considerable estate in the country, he was thought to be therefore peculiarly suited to the office; and by special favour, a grant was made to him of this high post for the space of ten years. Presuming, doubtless, on this long tenure of power, he conducted himself with such utter disregard to law and justice,¶ that, by order of the English authorities, he was taken into custody, while in the exercise of his vice-regal functions, and not only dispossessed of his high office, but severely punished for the oppressions and gross exactions of which he had been guilty.** A. D. 1383.

The direct agency, however, of the youthful monarch, was now beginning to make itself felt in the public councils; and that fatal mixture in his character, of vehement

* Davies.—According to an entry in the Issue Roll of this year, the mission of Dagworth was "for the purpose of inquiring concerning the estate and government of the land; and, also, of the estate, conduct, and condition of the men at arms, archers, and others dwelling there, at the king's charge, for the protection of the land."—*Pell Records.*

† Pat. Roll, 3 Ric. II.—Pryane, 306.

‡ "Virtute et animositate Anglicorum et Hibernicorum capti sunt duces eorum."—*Walsingham.* The particulars of this action, as given by Walsingham, may be found translated in Hollinshed. See also Smith, *History of Cork*, book. ii. chap. 3.

§ This lord went to the trouble of having some oaks transported to Ireland from his woods in Monmouthshire, for the purpose of building a bridge over the river Banne, "juxta villam de Kolleroth."—*Prioral. de Wigmore, Monast. Anglican.* He also supplied the monastery of Wigmore, to which he was much attached, with oxen, cows, sea fish, &c. from Ireland, as well as a share of the plunder acquired by him in his military capacity in that country,—"militari fortunâ sibi in prædam cedentia."—*Prioral. de Wigmore.*

‖ Pat. Roll, 5 Ric. II.—In his History of the Bishops, Ware incorrectly represents Colton as having been appointed lord justice the day after the earl of March's death, wholly omitting the important point of the summoning of a parliament for his election. There must have intervened nearly a fortnight before his appointment to the office.

¶ Rymer, tom. vi. p. 504.

** Davies.—In the Issue Roll of the thirteenth year of this reign, we find entries of payments made to sir Philip Courtenay, in recompense of damage done to his goods and chattels by the officers of Robert de Vere, from which it would appear that, of the two personages, Courtenay was much the more injured.—See *Issues of the Exchequer*, edited by Edward Devon.

self-will and passion, with but a limited share of judgment, which led ultimately to his ruin, was now shown in the favours showered by him on his young favourite, Robert de Vere, earl of Oxford, whom he created successively marquis of Dublin and duke of Ireland, and bestowed on him the entire sovereignty of that kingdom during his life, to be held by him as fully and perfectly as by Richard himself, or any of his royal pro-
A. D. 1385. genitors.* That the transfer, thus, of an ancient and once independent kingdom, should have been treated as a matter of child's play between a young king and his youthful minion, can hardly be a subject of much wonder; but the solemn sanction of an act so puerile, and moreover, illegal, by the grave prelates, peers, and commons of an English parliament, only shows how unscrupulous may be the decisions of a large body of councillors acting in concert, and under a responsibility scarce felt from being divided among so many. This parliament, also, with the view, doubtless, of ridding themselves of the favourite's presence, allotted the sum of 30,000† marks for his intended expedition to his new kingdom, besides a force of 500 men-at-arms, and 1000 archers.

Accompanied by Richard himself, De Vere proceeded as far as Wales on his way to Ireland; but there the monarch, either unwilling to part with his favourite, or seeing other emergencies arise in which his aid would be required, abandoned the intention of
A. D. 1389. sending him to Ireland, and appointed sir John Stanley to be lord deputy of that realm. While Stanley held this office, the great northern chieftain, O'Neill, and his sons, sent in their submission to the government in writing, renounced all claim to the bonaght‡ of Ulster, and gave oaths and hostages for their future allegiance.

On the death of the duke of Ireland, who ended his days in exile and misery at Louvain, James, the third earl of Ormond, was made lord justice; and, in a sharp action
A. D. 1392. fought by him with some Irish septs at a place called Tascoffin in the county of Kilkenny, slew 600 of their force.§

Though of such details as would afford any insight into the internal state of the country, the records of this period are even more than usually barren, the single fact that, in almost every parliament held in England during this reign, the king applied for aid to carry on the war in Ireland, sufficiently shows the sort of relationship in which, after a lapse of more than two centuries, the rulers and the ruled of that land still continued to stand towards each other. When such was the habitual condition of the country, it is by no means surprising that laws to compel people to reside in it should be of frequent occurrence in the statute book; or that neither by these laws, nor by their own stake in the soil, could land proprietors be brought to remain on their Irish estates. To so great an extent did this abuse prevail in the first years of the present reign, that the province of the Pale was left nearly depopulated by the great concourse of Irish landholders into England; and as, owing to this state of affairs, the king's revenue had been much reduced, while the power and daring of the Irish rebels were daily increasing, it was thought expedient to revive the law against absentees, and to put forth a proclamation requiring all persons whose homes were in that kingdom to repair thither without delay.

The duke of Gloucester, the king's uncle, a prince who combined in himself both the high rank to which the Irish were supposed to be partial,‖ and the vigour of character fitted for supreme command, consented to accept the office of lord lieutenant; and
A. D. 1393. was already preparing to embark with an army for the seat of his government when a royal order reached him, countermanding his departure, and, at the same time, acquainting him with the king's intention to conduct an expedition into Ireland in person.

For the adoption of this project so suddenly by Richard, various motives have been conjecturally assigned, each of them likely enough to have had some share in inducing him to form his determination. Besides the natural hope that his presence with a large force would do much towards curbing and pacifying the Irish, the grievous loss he had lately sustained by the death of his consort, the "good" queen Anne, had cast a clou

* "Adeo plene, integre et perfecte, sicut nos ea tenuimus et habuimus tenuerunt et habuerunt progenitores nostrorum aliqui." &c. For the letters patent granting to this young lord the title of Marquis of Dublin, the coat of arms, azure, with three golden crowns, &c., see Prynne, p. 87.

† The sum allotted for this purpose was a debt to the amount of 30,000 marks due from the king of France.

‡ *Bonaght* was an exaction imposed, at the pleasure of the lord, for the maintenance of his soldiery. "There were," says Harris, "two sorts of this imposition, viz. *Bonaght-bur* which was free quarter at discretion, and *Bonaght-beg*, which was a commutation for it in money or provisions, according to agreement with the lord."—Harris's Ware, *Antiq.* chap. 12.

§ Cox.

‖ Walsingham.—"All the Irishry," says Davies, "were ready to submit themselves before his coming; so much the very name of a great personage, especially a prince of the blood, did ever prevail with this people. The government of Ireland was again, at a subsequent period, offered to Gloucester; but he declined accepting it, saying, that Ireland was a country in which he could reap neither wealth nor glory.

over his spirits which the excitement, it was hoped, of so new and stirring a scene would tend to dissipate. But among these conjectures as to his motive for so sudden an enterprize, none seems more probable than that which attributes it to the mortifying repulse lately experienced by him, in his ambitious effort to be elected emperor of Germany.* On that occasion, when his ambassadors solicited for him the imperial crown, they were told that the electors did not hold a prince to be worthy of that dignity who could neither keep what his ancestors had gained in France, repress the insolence of his English subjects, nor reduce to obedience his rebellious vassals in Ireland. This bitter taunt, which it is not improbable may have added a spur to his present enterprize, was, as far as it regarded Ireland, perfectly founded in truth; and not with reference merely to its state under Richard himself, but to the condition of its people throughout every reign, from the time of the first landing of an English king upon their shores.

How little had, during that interval, been really effected towards their subjection, is virtually acknowledged in the letters patent conveying Ireland to the royal favourite, Robert de Vere;—the object of the powers thereby intrusted to him having been, in express terms, the "conquest" of that land. For this yet unaccomplished purpose, the army now landed by Richard at Waterford, which consisted of 4000 men-at-arms, and 30,000 archers, might appear to have been more than a sufficient force. A. D. 1394. But there hung a spell about the "Isle of Destiny,"† which continued to baffle and put to shame the arms and counsels of her invaders. With such a force to command submission, there was only wanting sufficient wisdom to lay the foundations of social improvement, by extending the protection of English law to the whole native population, and thus giving them that interest in the peace and well-being of the community which a right to participate in all its safe-guards and advantages is sure to inspire. Had such a course of policy been adopted by Richard, it is fair to conclude, from the petitions addressed to some of his predecessors, as well from large bodies of the natives as from individuals, praying for the benefits of the English law, that a measure granting this desired boon to the whole kingdom, and even enforcing its general acceptance, would have been hailed with joy and thankfulness by the great mass of the Irish people, and might have abridged, by many centuries, the dominion of anarchy in that realm.

But such, unluckily, was not the policy which this young monarch, though with means so ample, and having, to a certain extent, clear views of his regal duty, was far-sighted enough to adopt. A merely outward show of submission and allegiance, such as had been proffered to his progenitors, John and Henry II., was all that his superficial and hasty ambition aimed at; and this the present race of chieftains were fully as ready to proffer and promise as their ancestors, and, it may be added, with quite as little intention of adhering to their engagements. On the first alarm of his arrival, at the head of so numerous a force,—the largest ever yet landed upon the Irish shores,—the natives had fled to those natural fastnesses which a country intersected with woods and morasses afforded to them,‡ and so were enabled to elude the invader's approach. But all intention of offering resistance to so powerful a force was soon abandoned; and, it being understood that the submission of the chieftains would be graciously received, O'Neill, and other lords of Ulster, met the king at Drogheda, and there did homage and swore fealty with the usual solemnities,—laying aside their girdles, skeins, and caps, and then falling upon their knees at his feet.§

In the mean while, Mowbray, earl of Nottingham, and lord marshal of England, had been specially commissioned by the king to receive the homage and oaths of fealty of the Irish of Leinster. On the open plain, at Balligory, near Carlow, an interview was held by this lord with Art Mac Morough, the heir of the ancient kings of Leinster, and several other southern chiefs,‖ who there went through the same ceremonies of submission as had been performed in the king's presence, at Drogheda; after which the lord marshal gave to each of them the kiss of peace. They were likewise bound severally, by

* Davies.—Cox.

† Inisfail, an ancient name of Ireland.

‡ "But I shewe you, bycause ye should knowe the truth, Ireland is on of the ryell countries of the world to make warre upon, or to bring under subjection, for it is closed strongely and wydely with high forestes, and great waters and maresshes and places inhabytable; it is harde to entre to do them of the country anie domage; now ye shall fynde no towne nor persone to speke withal; for the men drawe to the woodes and dwell in caves and small cottages, under trees, and among busshes and hedges, lyke wylde savage beestes. . . . . For a man of arms beyng never so well horsed, and ron as fast as he can, the Yrishemen wyll ryn afote as faste as he, and overtake hym, yea, and leape up upon his horse behynde him, and drawe hym from his horse."—*Froissart.*

§ Davies.

‖ The names of the chiefs who submitted to Richard are thus strangely metamorphosed by Otterbourne:—"Perterriti eorum reguli se regi submisserunt, viz. Power, cum filio suo juxta Waterford; Ocell, Onelon, cum filio suo Abron; Macmourth, cum presbytero, Powerent, Dymell, Dagwith, de Demisin, et Arcay."—*Chronic. Reg. Anglie.*

indentures, and in large penalties, payable in the apostolic chamber, not only to continue loyal subjects, but to answer, for themselves and all their swordsmen, that they would, on a certain fixed day, surrender to the king and his successors all the lands and possessions held by them in Leinster, taking with them only their moveable goods. They also pledged themselves to serve him in his wars against all other Irish.*

In return for this total surrender of their ancient rights and patrimonies, they were to be taken into the pay of the crown, and receive pensions during their lives, together with the inheritance of all such territories as they could seize from the rebels in other parts of the realm; thus giving to these wretched chieftains, as a sort of salve for the injuries perpetrated on themselves, full license, and even encouragement, to inflict the same enormities upon others. The pension of eighty marks, bestowed on Mac Morough, the captain of the Cavanaghs, at this time, was continued to his posterity till the time of Henry VIII.

Neal O'Neill, who in the letters addressed by him to the king,† styles himself prince of the Irish of Ulster, was bound, in the indenture agreed upon between them, not only to remain faithful to the crown of England, but to restore to the earl of Ulster the bonaght, or war tax, of that province, which the family of the O'Neills, it was alleged, had usurped. It appears, from the enrolments still preserved of these different indentures and submissions, that the number of chieftains who proffered their homage and oaths of fidelity, was no less than seventy-five,—a fact, in itself, abundantly showing what a scene of confusion must have been the country in which such numbers of rude and petty potentates contributed each his share of despotism and misrule.

From the correspondence that passed between Richard and his council in England, during this expedition, it is clear that he regarded the submission of O'Neill and M'Morough as a signal success gained by his presence; while the council, in replying to his account of his "noble voyage, as they styled it, return, like skilful courtiers, an echo to his own opinion of it. In one important respect, these letters reflect credit on the monarch's memory, as showing him to have had sense enough to discover that English misrule was the main cause of Irish revolt, and manly candour enough to acknowledge so new and unpopular an opinion. "There are, in this our land," he writes from Dublin,‡ "three classes of persons,—wild Irish, or enemies, Irish rebels, and English subjects; and, considering that the rebels have been made such by wrongs, and by the want of due attention to their grievances, and that, if they be not wisely treated, and encouraged by hopes of favour, they will most probably join themselves with our enemies, we think it right to grant them a general pardon, and take them under our especial protection."

In their reply to this letter of the king, the duke and the council, after significantly reminding him that they had formerly advised the adoption of severe measures against the rebels, add that, in deference to his wise discretion, and the greater opportunity he possessed of acquiring information, on the spot, they freely assent to his views,—provided that, in return for the pardons granted to the rebels, certain large fines and ransoms should be paid by them towards the charges of the king's voyage.§

It was evidently gratifying to the vanity of Richard to parade thus his state and magnificence in the eyes of the rude but proud chiefs who followed as vassals in his train. One of the charges against him, some years after, on his deposition by parliament, was, that he had carried away the crown jewels to Ireland; and doubtless the pleasure of surprizing and dazzling these minor potentates was one of the very few purposes to which he could have found occasion to apply them. Wishing to confer upon these kings the honour of knighthood, he placed them under the care of an English gentleman, named Henry Castide,‖ who, having married a native woman and lived for many years in the

* Cox.

† Ego Nelanus O'Neil senior, tàm pro meipso, quam profiliis meis, et tato natione mea, et parentelis meis, et pro omnibus subditis meis, devenio ligeus homo vester," &c. &c.

‡ "Pource ensement qen notre terre Dirlande sont trois maners des gentz, cestassavoir Irrois savages nos enemis, Irrbix rebelx et Engleis obeissantz: semble a nous et a notre counseil esteant entour nous que considerez que les ditz Irroix rebelx se mount par cas rebelles pour griefs et tortz a eux faites dune part et par defaute que remedie he lont ad estez fet dautre part et qe ensement sils ne feussent sagement tretes et mis en bon espoir de grace, ils se vorrolent verisemblablement joindre a nos enemis, &c. &c.—See *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council of England*, edited by sir Norris Harris Nicholas.

§ *Proceedings and Ordinances, &c.*

‖ According to some readings, Cristal. This gentleman had been made prisoner, in a skirmish with the Irish, under circumstances which he himself thus described:—It chanced that in this pursuit my horse took fright, and ran away with me, in spite of all my efforts, into the midst of the enemy. My friends could never overtake me; and in passing through the Irish, one of them, by a great feat of agility, leaped on the back of my horse, and held me tight with both his arms, but did me no harm with lance or knife. . . . He seemed highly rejoiced to have made me his prisoner, and carried me to his house, which was strong, and in a town surrounded with wood, palisades, and stagnant water. The gentleman who had taken me was called Brin (or Brian) Costeret, a very handsome man. I have frequently made inquiries after him, and hear that he is still alive, but very old. This Brian Costeret kept me with him seven years, and gave me his daughter in marriage, by whom I have two girls."—*Froissart*, Johnes's translation.

country, was well acquainted with the Irish languages, desiring that he would instruct them in the dress, ceremonies, and manner of behaviour which would be required of them on such an occasion. When informed of the king's intention to make them knights, according to the usage of France, England, and other countries, they answered that they were already knights and needed no new creation. It was the custom, they added, of every Irish king, to confer that order upon his sons, when very young, and they themselves had been knights since they were seven years old; their first attempts at justing having been to run with small light spears against a shield set upon a stake in a meadow; and the more spears each of them broke the more honour he acquired.*

According to the account given of these chiefs by the French chronicler, who received his information from their instructor, the progress made by them in the forms and observances of courtly society was by no means very promising.† It was with difficulty he could bring them to relinquish their practice of dining at the same table with their own minstrels and servants, or succeed in prevailing upon them to wear breeches according to the English fashion. Much persuasion also was necessary before they could be induced to exchange the simple mantle of the country, for robes of silk trimmed with squirrel skin or miniver. At length, by the intervention of the earl of Ormond, who spoke their language, and was generally respected by the Irish, they consented to submit to the required forms. Having kept watch all the night before in the church, they were knighted, on Lady-day in the cathedral of Dublin; and the ceremony was followed by a great banquet, at which the four Irish kings attended in robes of state, and sat with king Richard at his table.‡

In the midst of all this parade Richard forgot not altogether the higher duties of his kingly station, but showed, by the care which he took in providing the courts of justice with able and trustworthy judges, as well as by the reforms commenced by him in legal proceedings, according to the precedents of England, that he both knew where lay the true causes of Ireland's misrule, and was fairly disposed, had the state of his English dominions allowed him leisure, to endeavour to correct and remove them. He had likewise, with a view to the peace and security of the city of Dublin, projected the establishment of a civil plantation in the mountains of Wicklow, having covenanted with the unquiet septs inhabiting that region, for their removal to some other quarter.§ A. D. 1394. 1395.

But these wise and useful projects were now all suddenly interrupted. The council had already urged his speedy return to England, in consequence of a rumour having reached them of the intention of the Scots to break the present truce.‖ But a still more pressing motive presented itself. The daring atack made upon the revenues and discipline of the church by those disciples of Wycliffe, called Lollards, had spread much alarm among the whole body of the clergy; and the archbishop of York and the bishop of London were deputed to hasten to the king in Ireland, and represent to him the danger, both of spoliation and heresy to which the church was, at that moment, exposed. An appeal proceeding from this quarter he would doubtless regard as worthy of peculiar attention on account of the munificence with which the church had come forward to contribute to the expenses of his Irish expedition; most of the prelates (as well as likewise of the lords of the council) having advanced each a loan of one thousand pounds, for that purpose;—not being bound thereto, as they took care to protest, by any strict right, but by their affection for their king.¶

In consequence of all this, the king, after passing his birth-day in Dublin, and according to some accounts, holding a parliament in that city, returned in the summer of the year 1395, into England, leaving, most rashly, his young kinsman, Roger Mortimer, earl of March, with ample powers, to act as his lieutenant. This young nobleman, whose hereditary rank, in the event of Richard dying without issue, placed him nearest in succession to the throne,** had, on the death of his father, at Cork, in 1392, been left a minor under the legal guardianship of the king; and though, in violation of this trust, some minions of the court had during his minority, been admitted into the profits of the estates,†† his property, nevertheless, on his coming of age, was im- A. D. 1395.

* Froissart.

† "Kynge Edwarde, of good memory, dyd never so worke upon them as kynge Richarde dyd in this voyage; the honour is great, but the profyte is but lytell; for though they be kynges, yet no man can deuyse nor speke of ruder personages."—*Froissart.*

‡ Froissart. § Davies.

‖ "Par cause qe les Escotz a ce qe nous avons entendus ne veullen tenir ne garder ces presentes trieues."—*Acts of Privy Council.*

¶ Walsingham. "Facta prius protestatione, quod ad hoc concedendum non tenebantur de stricto jure, sed sui regis effectoine."

** With a view to such an occurrence, he was nominated by the parliament of 1385 heir presumptive to the crown.

†† Walsingham.

mense. When accompanying the king to Ireland, he had in his retinue 100 men-at-arms, of which two were bannerets, and eight knights, 200 archers on horseback, and 400 archers on foot.

It soon became manifest, that the Irish chieftains, in their late specious submissions, had no other view than to bow temporarily to the immediate pressure of power, and then to raise again their heads as soon as the storm should have blown over; for scarcely had the king sailed with his forces from the shore, when fierce incursions were made into the borders of the Pale. Thus suddenly attacked, and in different quarters at the same time, the English lords, supplying by valour what they wanted in numbers, repulsed boldy the assailants; and a force commanded by sir Thomas de Burgh and Walter de Bermingham, slew 600 of the Irish, together with their chieftain Mac Con. The lord lieutenant, assisted by the earl of Ormond, was no less successful in quelling the O'Byrnes of Wicklow; and the feat of storming the ancient manor-house of the chief of this sept was triumphantly commemorated within its walls, by the creation of seven knights.*

A summons at this time, to attend the parliament, at Shrewsbury, afforded the young viceroy a welcome opportunity of displaying the pomp and pageantry in which he so much delighted; and he accordingly made his appearance there, at the head of a crowd of retainers, all apparelled, at his own expense, in white and crimson.† But a sad reverse awaited his return to the seat of his government. For, while engaged in a conflict, at Kenlis, with the sept of the O'Byrnes, having been hurried on, by his impetuous valour, into the ranks of the enemy, he was slain, and, it is said, torn to pieces, by the natives.‡

In the year 1398, Thomas Holland, duke of Surrey, half brother to the king, was sent over to Ireland as lord lieutenant, attended by a foreigner, named Janico d'Artois, whose name occurs frequently, in our records, during this, and the three or four following reigns, and always connected with the charge or exercise of some great public trust, military or civil.

A. D. 1398.

Nearly five years had now elapsed from the time of Richard's first visit to Ireland, when, under circumstances which rendered so wild a scheme of adventure almost unaccountable, he again undertook a great expedition to that kingdom. The line of policy pursued by him, in England, during the interval, had been such as to render him at once powerful and odious; to remove arbitrarily out of his way all individual rivals and opponents, but, at the same time, to array against him the combined hatred of the great mass of the people. Of the immense power that had accrued to the crown, during the struggle, he was but too fully aware; but the amount and strength of the popular reaction against his tyranny, he was by no means prepared to expect,—having succeeded mean while in lulling himself into that false sense of security from which successful tyranny is in general awakened but by its downfal. In no other way can the strange fatuity be accounted for which led him, at this crisis of his fortunes, to absent himself from his high post, as sovereign of England, and with the sole view, as he professed, of avenging the death of his cousin, the earl of March,§ to undertake a second wild and wasteful expedition against the rebellious chieftains of Ireland.

Having appointed his uncle, the duke of York, to be regent during his absence, the king, after assisting at a solemn mass at Windsor, and chanting a collect himself, took wine and spices, we are told, at the door of the church, with his young queen, who was then but eleven years of age, and, lifting her up in his arms, kissed her several times, saying, "Adieu, madam, adieu, till we meet again."‖ He then proceeded, attended by a train of lords, to Bristol, where some reports reached him of plots against his government, which were treated by him with disregard. For the naval part of the armament, the preparations had been on a grand scale. Impressment had been resorted to for the manning of the fleet; and vessels were ordered to assemble at Milford or Bristol from all ports and places on the sea-coast northward as far as Newcastle-upon-Tyne. There were also minstrels attendant upon the army; and, as one who accompanied the expedition tells us, "trumpets and the sound of minstrels might be heard day and night." Joining his forces at Milford Haven, he embarked in a fleet of 200 sail, and

A. D. 1399.

* Annal. Hibern.

† "Etiam expensis propriis, pro majori parte, in coloribus suis, scilicet rubeo et albo vestitis."

‡ Nequiter occisus et membratim dilaceratus."—*Vita Regis Ric.* In answer to a petition of the earl of Northumberland, and other executors of this young lord (Close Roll, 1 Hen. IV.,) he is said to have been "casualiter nequiter interfectus." It is added, in some accounts, that he was disguised, on this occasion, in the habit and accoutrements of an Irish soldier.

§ Walsingham.—In the writ ordering the preparations for this voyage he thus assigns the motives of his expedition:—"Propter malitiam quorundum Hibernicorum inimicorum nostrorum qui contra nos, ex eorum protervia, a diu est, rebelles et inobedientes accreverunt."

‖ Lingard.

in less than two days, arrived in sight of the town of Waterford. On landing, he was received by the merchants and other citizens with a cordial welcome.* The king had been landed but a few days, when his active officer, Janico d'Artois, taking advantage of the approach of the grand army, began to attack the Irish; and, in a conflict with them at Kenlis, in the county of Kildare, slew 200 of their force.†

After remaining about a week in Waterford, the king marched his army to Kilkenny, where he was detained for fourteen days, expecting anxiously the arrival of the duke of Albemarle. This nobleman, who was Richard's cousin, had been ordered to follow with a fleet of 100 sail, and his long delay was afterwards attributed to secret concert with the king's enemies.‡ When joined by this force, the monarch, though straitened for want of provisions for his unwieldy numbers, directed his march towards the chief Mac Morough, who, retired within his woods and fastnesses, with a large multitude of followers, bade defiance to the arms of the invaders, denounced their power as founded in force and injustice, and declared his resolution "to defend the land unto his death."

Relying on the strengths and intrenchments furnished to them by nature, and preferring the short irregular skirmish to the set battle, the Irish seldom afforded an opportunity of judging of the extent of their whole force. The narrator, however, of the events of this war—himself an eye-witness of much that he describes§—states Mac Morough's army to have consisted of "3000 stout men;" and adds, they were "such as it appeared to him the English marvelled to behold."‖ But notwithstanding that the king's army remained for some time drawn out, in order of battle, at the entrance of the dense woods in which the natives had intrenched themselves, there appeared no chance of provoking the latter to risk an engagement in the open field. All that remained, therefore, for Richard, was, to set fire to the adjacent villages, and employ their inhabitants in cutting a passage for the march of his army through the woods. Having taken this resolution, the king advanced his standard, and created under it several knights, among whom was the young Henry of Monmouth,—in after years, the victorious Henry the fifth,—whom a spectator of the scene describes as then "a young, fair, and promising bachelor." The king had taken this youth with him to Ireland, in order that he might learn there the rudiments of war, and make his first trial of arms;¶ and on the present occasion, when raising him to the honour of knighthood, Richard is said to have thus addressed him,—"My fair cousin, be henceforth preux and valiant, for you have some valiant blood to conquer."

But the march of the royal army was beset with difficulties and delays, the road being encumbered with fallen trees, and in many places so boggy, that the soldiers, as they marched, sunk into it up to the middle; while, in the mean time, flying parties of Irish, "so nimble and swift of foot, that, like unto stags, they ran over mountains and valleys," hovered around with barbarous howls, in every direction, cutting off the stragglers and foragers, and hurling their darts or short javelins with a degree of force that no coat of arms could withstand.

Though M'Morough himself had beheld without flinching the approach of the assailants, there were others of the Irish chiefs, and among those his own uncle, who, panic-struck

* French metrical narrative :—

"Mainte trompette y pouvoit enoir,
De jour de nuit menestreiz retentir,"

† That this officer had already distinguished himself, during the duke of Surrey's government, may be concluded from the manner in which their names are coupled by an old chronicler :—"Virtus ducis Southreim et Janichonis Alemanni in Hibernia clariut."—*Chronic. Thomæ. in Leland. Collectan.* Though described in this extract as a German, he is generally supposed to have been a Gascon gentleman.

‡ Lingard.—"He was kept (says stow) tarrying for the duke of Albemarle, that kept not the right course."

§ The writer of the *Histoire du Roy d'Angleterre, Richard*,—an account, in French metre, of the last four or five months of Richard's reign. Of this curious tract there exist two MSS., one of which is in the British Museum, and the other in the library of Lambeth Palace. A translation of that portion of the story which relates to Ireland was made by the eminent sir George Carew, lord president of Munster (see, Harris's *Hibernica*.) But the entire narrative has found, within our own time, an accomplished translator and commentator in the Rev. J. Webb. *Archæologia*, vol. xx.

‖ Carew's translation; thus translated by Webb:—"Wilder people I never saw; they did not appear to me to be much dismayed at the English." The following is the original :—

"Trois mil homes qui fourent moult hardi,
Et si apers, conques teiz gens ne vy;
Dangloiz trop pou estoient esbahi,
Ce me sembla."

¶ "Ut rem militarem disceret et primum exerceret."—Tit. Liv. *Vita Hen. V.*

by the numbers of the enemy, hastened, with halters round their necks, and, falling, prostrate at the king's feet, implored of him mercy and peace. A grant of free pardon was accordingly vouchsafed to them, on condition of their swearing to remain, from thenceforward, true and loyal subjects. At the same time, a message was sent by the king to Mac Morough, summoning that chief to appear before him in a like suppliant guise, and engaging that, if he would thus humbly submit himself, not only should mercy be accorded to him, but the king would bestow upon him, as the reward of his loyalty, ample territories and towns.

The subtle chief, however, knew far too well the real motive of these plausible offers, to allow himself to be shaken, for a moment, from his plan of protracted resistance. He knew, so distressed were the English army for want of provisions, that numbers of the soldiers had already perished by famine; that this scourge had extended also to the officers, and that the whole camp was full of despondence and murmurs. Emboldened, therefore, by this knowledge, he replied to the king's message, that "not all the gold in the world could tempt him into submission; that he would continue still to carry on the war, and do the king all the injury in his power." In the mean time, the arrival from Dublin of three ships, laden with provisions, afforded some slight relief to the famished soldiers, who are described as plunging eagerly into the sea to reach the vessels, and even wounding each other in their fierce contest for relief.

The king was now left no other alternative than to decamp and march immediately for Dublin: nor even this was he allowed to effect without molestation, as the Irish enemy hung upon his rear, and, by harassing the troops by constant skirmishes, delayed and embarrassed their retreat.

Having performed thus the only duty that Ireland's chiefs were now left the power to fulfil,—that of reminding their proud masters that the conquered still had arms, nor wanted the spirit to use them,—Mac Morough sent to request of the king a safe conduct to the royal presence, for the purpose of tendering his humble submission;—or, if this proposal should be found displeasing, suggesting that Richard should send some of his lords to treat with the chief on terms of peace. The news of this overture was received with delight in the English camp, where all were weary of the hard service they had lately been engaged in, and joyfully welcomed a chance of rest. By advice of his council, the king appointed the earl of Gloucester, who was the commander of his rear-guard, to meet Mac Morough at the place of conference; instructing him to impress on the chief the enormity of his wrongs and crimes against the king's lieges; and also the retribution demanded by justice for his many gross and daring breaches of faith.

The earl took with him to this singular interview a guard of 200 lances and 1000 archers; and among the personages who, from mere curiosity, accompanied him to the scene of the conference, was, luckily, the writer of the narrative already so frequently referred to, whose lively description of the manner and appearance of the Irish chief shall here be given, as nearly as translation will allow, in his own words. "From a mountain, between two woods, not far from the sea, we saw Mac Morough descending, accompanied by multitudes of the Irish, and mounted upon a horse without a saddle, which cost him, it was reported 400 cows. His horse was fair, and, in his descent from the hill to us, ran as swift as any stag, hare, or the swiftest beast I have ever seen.* In his right hand he bore a long spear, which, when near the spot where he was to meet the earl he cast from him with much dexterity. The crowd that followed him then remained behind, while he advanced to meet the earl, near a small brook,† He was tall of stature, well composed, strong and active; his countenance fierce and cruel.‡

The parley that then ensued was maintained for a considerable time; the English lord

* "Entre deux bois, assez loing de la mer
Maquemore la montaigne avaler
Vy, et dirlois, que pars ne scay nombrer,
Y ot foison.
Un cheval ot sans sele ne arcon,
Qui lui avoit couste, ce disoit on,
Quatreces vaches tant estoit bel et bon."

† "Deulx deux fut la lassemblee faite
Pres dun ruissel.
La se maintint masquemore: asselx bel
Grans homs estoit, a merveilles ysnel;
A vous dueil sembloit fort fier et fel,
Et homs defait."

‡ *Metrical Narrative*, Carew's translation.

reproaching the chief with his various acts of perfidy, his murder of the earl of March,* and of others of the king's loyal subjects. But on neither side was there any advance made towards reconcilement, and the conference ended in leaving the parties as much asunder as when it commenced; the sole conditions on which the king would admit Mac Morough to his peace being such as that chief had haughtily declared he would never submit to while he had life. The Leinster prince had therefore to return to his woods and fastnesses; while Gloucester hastened back to report the result to his royal master, who, thrown into a violent rage, on hearing it, swore by St. Edward, that "he would never depart out of Ireland until he had Mac Morough, living or dead, in his hands."

But the unfortunate monarch's own doom was fast approaching. He had reached Dublin, with his army, and found in that city such plenty of provisions, that even the 30,000 men which his force added to the population did not much raise, we are told, the prices in the market.† Here he was joined at last, by the re-enforcements under the duke of Albemarle, whose arrival he had been so long expecting; and, having resolved to carry on the war vigorously against Mac Morough, he divided his army into three portions, with the view of surrounding the fierce chief in his woody covert, and so hunting him into the toils. He had also proclaimed that whoever would deliver him into his hands, dead or alive, should receive 100 marks of gold.

For the space of six weeks during which Richard remained in Dublin, passing the time in a round of gaieties and pomps, there prevailed such a course of stormy weather and adverse winds that all communication of intelligence from England was interrupted; "which appeared to me, undoubtedly," adds the authority already cited, "to be a presage that God was displeased with the king." At last, there arrived a small bark in the port of Dublin, conveying to Richard the alarming intelligence that Henry of Bolingbroke, duke of Lancaster, had taken advantage of his absence to land in England; that already some of the most powerful of the English barons had joined his banner, as well as a large portion of the mass of the people, and that this spirit of disaffection was spreading fast through the whole kingdom. The first act of Richard, on learning this ominous news, was to give vent to a burst of petty revenge against Lancaster, by ordering his unoffending son, the young lord Henry, to be imprisoned in the castle of Trim, together with the son of the duke of Gloucester.

The advice of the majority of Richard's council was, that he should proceed with all possible speed to England; but Albemarle—who possessed, undeservedly, as it proved, his confidence,—opposed this opinion of the council; and recommended that, for the present, there should only be sent a small detachment, under lord Salisbury, into Wales, there to form a point of union for the king's friends; while, in the mean time, sufficient shipping might be collected at Waterford to convey from thence the king and the main body of his force. This ill-omened advice was readily adopted; the earl of Salisbury, as he reluctantly embarked, entreating most earnestly of his royal master to follow without delay; while the king, in promising to lose no time, swore also, by great oaths, that "if Lancaster fell into his hands, he would cause him to die such a death as that the fame thereof should sound as far as Turkey." Notwithstanding all this show of spirit, nearly three weeks elapsed before Richard arrived in Milford Haven; and, during that interval, the last feeble chance of preserving either his throne or life had vanished.

It may be worth noticing that, in answer to a petition from Ireland, in the third year of this reign, praying for leave to dig mines, the king gives permission for every one to dig in his own grounds, for gold, silver, and all other metals, during the following six years,—paying the ninth part thereof to the king, and sending the rest to the king's mint, at Dublin.‡ The gold mines of Ireland had been, from very early times, a subject of speculation; and it appears from a writ addressed, in the year 1360, to James, earl of Ormond, that several mines, both of gold and silver, were at that time supposed to have been discovered.§

* "Quant le conte de la Marche courtoys
Firent mourir, sans jugement ne lois."

The epithet "courteous" here bestowed upon the young earl of March, is fully justified by the character given of him in a record cited by Mr. Webb: "He was distinguished by the qualities held in estimation at that time; a stout tourneyer, a famous speaker, a costly feaster, a bounteous giver, in conversation affable and jocose, in beauty of form surpassing his fellows."

† "Dublin, a good city," says the *Metrical Narrative*, "standing upon the sea, and containing such great abundance of merchandise and provisions, that it was said that neither flesh nor fish, bread-corn nor wine, nor other store, was any dearer for all the army of the king. I know full well that they were more than 30,000 that sojourned therein and around."

‡ Prynne p. 308.

§ "Quia datum est nobis intelligi quod quamplurus minæ auri et argenti, in dicta terra nostra Hibernia existunt," &c.—Rymer, tom. v. ad ann. 1360.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

HENRY IV.

Struggle between the Houses of York and Lancaster.—Beneficial ultimately to England—ruinous to Ireland.—Invasion of Scotland by Henry.—Predatory attacks on the Irish Coasts by the Scots.—The king's son made lord lieutenant.—Murder of the sheriff of Louth by four English gentlemen.—Right of the sword conferred on the corporation of Dublin.—Submission of Irish chiefs.—Parliament held at Trim.—Expedition against Mac Morough—his gallant resistance and defeat.—The king's son, Thomas of Lancaster, again made lieutenant—reforms contemplated by him.—Arrest and imprisonment of the earl of Kildare.—The lord lieutenant wounded in an affray—summons a parliament—is succeeded in his office by the prior of Kilmainham.—State of Ireland at this period.—Proofs of the decline of English power.

A. D. 1399. By Henry's election to the throne of England,—for such was virtually his title to the crown,—the seeds were sown of those long and sanguinary wars, between the two rival houses of York and Lancaster, of which the whole history is as confused and uncertain as the known results were bloody, treacherous, and disgraceful. One salutary consequence, however, of these contests was the gradual extension of the powers of parliament, and those wholesome restraints on the royal authority, which the precarious position of the Lancastrian princes, enabled the commons, through three successive reigns, to urge and impose. It was, unfortunately, only in the evils of such a struggle that the usual destiny of Ireland allowed her to have any share. The important principle established by Richard's deposition, and the weight thrown into the popular scale by the uncertainty of the tenure of the crown, were advantages derived by England from the wars of the two Roses, which she purchased cheaply, even at the cost of so many years of internal strife. But far different were the state and prospects of the wretched people so anomalously connected with her, who, while sharing in all the worst consequences of such a course of convulsion, saw neither hope nor chance of any of its atoning advantages; but left at the mercy of some viceroy's deputy, without even an attempt to redress or palliate their wrongs, found that, though subjects of a state advancing in the high road to freedom, they were, themselves, sinking every day deeper into degradation and barbarism.

A. D. 1400. When Henry, soon after his accession, assuming the character of lord superior of Scotland, proceeded to invade that country, the northern coasts of Ireland became frequently an object of attack on the part of the Scots. "Both from the high country and from the isles," as the language of the record expresses it,* numerous expeditions were fitted out for the Irish shores; where the traditions, still freshly preserved, of the gallant though fruitless efforts of Bruce, could not fail to rally the natives around the Scottish banner. One of these small armaments having been encountered, near Strangford in Ulster, by a naval force, under the command of the constable of Dublin castle, repulsed triumphantly the attack and slew great numbers of the English.†

During the administration of sir John Stanley, who held at this period the post of lord lieutenant, a subsidy was granted, for three years, by the English parliament, to provide for the exigencies of the government.

The policy which had been pursued in most of the preceding reigns, and, on no graver grounds, probably, than the supposed fancy of the Irish for persons of high rank, of sending some member of the royal family to direct the affairs of that country, was adopted likewise under the present king, who intrusted to his second son, Thomas, duke of Lancaster, though yet not quite of age,‡ the responsible office of lord lieutenant. Landing, on Sunday the 13th of November, at a place called Blowyk, near Dalkey,§ this prince

* Pat. Roll, 5 Hen. IV.—"Tam de alta patria quam de insulis."

† Cox.—Marleburrough.

‡ Thomas Erpingham and Hugh Waterson, knight, had been appointed the young lord lieutenant's guardians.—*Pat. Roll*, 3 Hen. IV.

§ "Applicuit apud Blowyk juxta Dalkey."—*Pat. Roll.* 3 Hen. IV.

proceeded from thence, on the same day, to Dublin. Shortly after his arrival, John Drake, the mayor of Dublin, marched forth, at the head of a strong body of citizens, against the O'Byrnes of Wicklow, whose force consisted, it is said, of 4000 men, and encountering them in the neighbourhood of Bray, killed near 500 of their number, and put the rest to rout.* A. D. 1402.

An event that occurred in the course of this administration shows how very little, in respect to civilization and morals, the despised native and his proud foreign master differed from each other. During a parliament held in Dublin, by the lord lieutenant, sir Bartholomew Vernon and three other English gentlemen publicly attacked and murdered the sheriff of Louth, John Dowdal; for which, and for sundry other felonies committed by them, these civilizers of Ireland were outlawed, and their estates disposed of by custodiams.† But even this sluggish effort of justice was only transitory, as the king, shortly after, pardoned the offences of the criminals, and restored to them their estates during life.‡

An event, important at least in the history of the corporation of Dublin, took place in the course of this year. The right of the sword, or, in other words, the privilege of having a gilt sword carried before its chief magistrate, was granted by the king to the city of Dublin.§

As the outward and specious submission of some of the principal native chiefs formed, in general, a part of the pageant prepared to welcome the presence of royalty on these shores, an imposing display of this kind was not wanting to greet the present vicegerent; and Achy Mac Mahon, O'Byrne of the Mountains, and Riley, the head of a great northern sept, all submitted and entered into covenants of allegiance and service with the lord lieutenant.‖ In the instance of O'Byrne, too, a pledge of no ordinary value was obtained; as this chief, in assurance of his sincerity, granted to the king the castle of Mackenigan, and the appurtenances. After remaining not quite two years of his long term, the royal duke returned to England, leaving as deputy, sir Stephen Scroop, who, in the following year, resigned to a new lord justice, James, earl of Ormond.

Though the truce that ensued between England and Scotland, after the memorable victory of Homildon Hill, was at this period still in force, there occurred, on both sides, frequent infractions of it, by armed merchantmen and cruisers. The depredations of some Scottish pirates, in the Irish seas, provoked reprisals of a similar nature; and the merchants of Drogheda, as well as of Dublin, fitting out ships to different parts of the coast of Scotland, succeeded in bringing from thence considerable plunder. In a marauding expedition of the same kind into Wales,—where the heroic chieftain, Owen Glendower, was, at this time, baffling the arms of the Henrys, both father and son, by efforts of valour so prodigious as to be attributed to the spells of necromancy,—there was now carried away, among other booty, a shrine of the Welsh saint, St. Cubin, which the pious plunderers, on their return to Dublin, placed as an offering in the priory of the Holy Trinity, now called Christ Church.¶ A. D. 1404.

The piratical warfare between the Irish merchants and the Scots was put an end to this year, by a sort of treaty of peace, the negotiation of which with Macdonald, lord of the isles, was intrusted by the king to John Dongan, bishop of Derry, and Janico d'Artois. A. D. 1405.

Gerald, the fifth earl of Kildare, having been for a short time lord justice, gave place to sir Stephen Scroop, who again came over as lord deputy, and held a parliament at Dublin, in January, which, in the lent after, concluded its session at Trim. A. D. 1406.

It is painful to be compelled to remind the reader that such, and such only, is the qua-

* Marleburrough.—Harris (*Hist. of Dublin*) incorrectly cites Campion as having made the number of slain amount to 4000.

† Marleburrough. ‡ Cox.

§ Pat. Roll, 4 Hen. IV. "Quod major civitatis Dublini et successores sui imperpetuum, habeant quandam gladium, deauratum coram eis postatum prout Major' London'." Cox, who places this event incorrectly in the tenth year of Henry's reign, adds, that at the same time with the grant of the sword, the "provost" of Dublin was changed into a "mayor." But this is also incorrect. As early as the 18th year of Henry III. we find a writ of the king addressed, "Majori et civibus Dublin;" and the cities of Waterford, Drogheda, Limerick, Cork, could all boast of mayors at nearly as early a period. See Smith's *Hist. of Cork*, book ii. chap. ix.;—Ferrar's *Hist. of Limerick*; where the first mayor of Limerick is placed ten years earlier than the first mayor of London;—Ryland's *Hist. of Waterford*, where, however, the date of the first mayor is carried no farther back than A. D. 1377; &c. &c. To the mayors of Dublin, Hollinshed pays the following tribute of praise:—"This Maioralitie, both for state and charge of office, and for bountiful hospitalitie, exceedeth anie citie in England, London excepted."

‖ Pat. Roll, 3 Hen. IV.—To Achy Mac Mahon, at the same time, was granted, during his life, on condition that he should always be ready, with his force, against the king's rebels, the land and demesne (with the exception of the castle) of Fernewy, in the county of Louth.

¶ Marleburrough.

lity of the materials furnished by Ireland to the pen of history, at a period that witnessed the dawning glories of the future hero of Azincourt, and which, in such storied names as Hotspur, Douglas, Owen Glendower, has transmitted recollections that link history with song, and lend a lustre to the humblest legend in which even a trace of such names is found.

The Leinster chieftain, Art Mac Morough, who defied so boldly, as we have seen, in his rude fortresses, the showy squadrons of the late king Richard, had remained, for the first few years of this reign, perfectly quiet; and we find that, shortly after Henry's accession, the letters patent of the 18th year of Richard, granting a pension of eighty marks a year to this chief, were inspected by the king and ratified.* But, in conse-

A. D. 1407. quence, this year, of some hostile demonstration on his part, the lord deputy Scroop, accompanied by the earls of Ormond and Desmond, the prior of Kilmainham, and other captains and gentlemen of Meath, set out from Dublin with a considerable force, and finding Mac Morough prepared to resist, marched their army into his territories. So gallant was the stand made by the Irish, that, for some time, the fortune of the field was on their side. But at length the English, by superior soldiership, prevailed and, learning that another body of insurgents was up at Callan, in the county of Kilkenny, they marched to that town with such rapidity as to take them by surprise, and about 800 of the rebels were, together with their leader, O'Carol, put to the sword.†

On returning to Dublin, the earl of Ormond,‡ though not yet of age, was elected lord justice, and, in the following year, held a parliament in that city, by which the statutes of Dublin and Kilkenny were again confirmed.

The experiment of the effects of a royal presence was now again resorted to in the person of Thomas, the young duke of Lancaster, but apparently not with improved

A. D. 1408. success; although, in the terms on which he undertook the government, the powers and means he stipulated for, and the nature of the reforms contemplated by him, there is much that bespeaks at least the intention of fair and useful administration. Among other conditions, it is stipulated that, in order to strengthen the English plantation, he may be allowed to transport into Ireland, at the king's charge, one or two families from every parish in England. He also required that the demesnes of the crown should be resumed, and the act against absentees strictly enforced.‡

The jealousy naturally felt towards the great Anglo-Irish lords by those Englishmen of high rank and station, who were sent over to administer the affairs of the kingdom, was strongly exemplified in the instance of the present viceroy, who—apparently, without any just grounds for such violent proceedings—caused the earl of Kildare and three of his family to be arrested, and kept the earl himself a prisoner in Dublin Castle, until he had paid down the sum of 300 marks.§ It is indeed manifest, even through the scanty notices of his government transmitted to us, that the royal duke was allowed but little repose or security during his lieutenancy; and mention is made of a serious encounter at Kilmainham, in which he was desperately wounded, and narrowly escaped with his life.‖ No farther particulars of this affray are recorded; but that it was serious would appear from the measures soon after adopted by the duke, who ordered proclamation to be made that all who were bound by their tenures to serve the king, should forthwith assemble at Ross. He also summoned a parliament to meet at Kilkenny, in order to have a tallage granted.¶ How far he succeeded in the object of these assemblies does not appear; the only remaining event recorded of his administration being its final close, on the 13th of

A. D. 1409. March, 1409, when the prince set sail for England, leaving his brother, Thomas Butler, the prior of Kilmainham, his deputy.

In the following year a parliament was held by the prior, at Dublin, which made it treason to exact coyne and livery; and shortly after, having imprudently ventured, with about 1500 kerns, or Irish infantry, to invade the O'Byrnes' country, one half of his followers deserted to the enemy, and he narrowly escaped a serious and disgraceful defeat.

No other event deserving of particular notice occurs in our records for the few re-

* Pat. Roll, 1 Hen. IV. † Marleburrough.

‡ Natural son of the late or third earl of Ormond, who, says Carte, "had two illegitimate children, viz. Thomas le Botiller, alias Baccagh, prior of Kilmainham, a martial man, and lord justice of Ireland in 1409-9,—from whom came several good families of gentlemen in the counties of Kilkenny and Tipperary,—and James le Botiller, alias Galdie, from whom the lords of Cahir (created barons in 1543) and divers other principal gentlemen, in the counties of Tipperary and Waterford, are descended." In speaking of this lord, who was the fourth earl of Ormond, Carte describes him as "not only a man of good parts, but (which was very rare in noblemen at that time) master of a great deal of learning;" such as was even thought, he adds, sufficient "to qualify him for the highest trusts and employments, before the law deemed him fit to enjoy his estate."—*Introduct.*

§ Cox. ‖ Marleburrough. ¶ Ibid.

maining years of this reign, which was brought to a close by Henry's death, in the abbot's chamber, at Westminster, on the 20th of March, 1413.

Scantily supplied, as the historian finds himself, at this period, with the two great essentials of the historic scene, events and actors, his only resource for the means of acquiring any insight into the condition of the country lies in the materials supplied by its legal records; and, perhaps, in most cases, it is the state of the law among a people that affords the least fallible means of forming a judgment respecting their moral and social condition. Viewing Ireland with the aid of such lights, at this period, we find, in the first place, abundant evidence of the declension of English power throughout the whole kingdom. The encroachments on the Pale, by the neighbouring Irish, became every day more daring and formidable; and whereas, hitherto, the English borderers could not make war or peace with the natives without leave from the government, the necessity of such special permission was now, in consequence of the greater urgency of the danger, dispensed with; and licenses were granted to particular individuals to deal with "the enemy" in whatever manner or on whatsoever terms the exigence of the crisis might require.*

For the same reason, the general interdict against holding traffic or trade with the natives, or admitting them to the English markets, was at this time withdrawn; the inhabitants of the Pale being hemmed in so closely, on every side, by the people of the country, that, without such licenses as now were issued to qualify the prohibition, they ran the risk of being reduced to poverty and starvation.†

Equally obvious proofs of the sobering influence of fear in obtaining for the Irish that abatement of persecution which they would have in vain sought from justice or mercy, are to be found in other acts and measures of this period; such as the increased extension of charters of denization to the natives; the permissions to persons living in the marches to take Irish tenants; and the instances of leave given to certain individuals—in despite of the statute of Kilkenny, declaring such practices treasonable—to enter into gossipred and fosterage,‡ and even to marry with the "Irish enemy." It is almost needless to remark, that concessions thus wrung so manifestly from fear, instead of conciliating, only added contempt to deep-rooted hate, and encouraged still farther and more daring encroachments. It was accordingly in the marches, and more especially those of Meath, that lay the most frequent scenes of conflict, confusion, and bloodshed; and the English authorities were, in consequence, driven to the humiliating expedient of buying off the hostilities of the chiefs on the borders, by means of annual pensions, under the denomination of Black Rent;—a sort of compact which, being well known to proceed from terror, on one side, was sure to be violated without scruple when the motives were tempting, on the other.

While such was the wretched state of the border districts, the course of affairs within the Pale appears to have been hardly of a less lawless and violent character. In a petition from the commons of Ireland, attributed generally to the time of this monarch,§ we find the law officers of the crown charged with gross abuses and acts of oppression, in consequence of which, according to the petitioners, the people were harassed and impoverished, works of husbandry neglected, and many good towns and hamlets utterly ruined. It is stated, also, that, in defiance of Magna Charta, many churchmen, lords, gentlemen, and others of the king's subjects, were cast into prison without any legal process, and their lands seized and considered as forfeited. Nor was it only by a licentious soldiery that such open acts of spoliation were perpetrated, but by sheriffs, justices of the peace, and other ministers of the king. Among instances adduced in proof of this charge, it is stated that the lieutenant of Ireland himself received, in this lawless manner, eighty marks of the goods of the archbishop of Armagh, and took to the value of 40*l.* of the goods of the archdeacon of Kildare. Of the same high functionary it is stated, together with various other such specimens of his vice-regal conduct, that he kept sir Nicholas Alger imprisoned until he had obtained from him a missal worth ten marks, and forty marks in

* The following is pretty much the general form of these licenses:—"Rex, pro eo quod maneria et possessiones Cornelii Episcopi in lymk. in frontura marchiarum inter Hibernicos inimicos et Anglicos rebelles sita sunt, concessit ei, tenentibus et servientibus suis quod ipsi cum dictis Hibernicis, &c. tractare possent," &c. —*Pat. Roll*, 10 *Hen. IV.*

† Thus, in answer to a petition from the town of Rosse, to be allowed to trade with the Irish enemy, it is said,—"Cum villa predicta in marchiis sita et Hibernicis inimicis undique circumvallata, non habeat unde vivere valeat, nisi solomodo exempcione, &c. victualium et aliarum parvarum rerum quas prefatis inimicis, ad evitandam eorum malitiam necessario vendere oportet," &c. &c.—*Pat. Roll*, 4 *Hen. IV.*

‡ Licenses to place English children with Irish nurses begin to abound at this period. One example will be sufficient. "Rex, pro servicio, licenciam dedit Willielmo filio Henric. Betagh quod ipse Elizam filiam suam cuidam Odoni Oraylly Hibernico dare possit ad nutriendum."—*Pat. Roll*, 7 *Hen. IV.*

§ *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council*, edited by sir H. Nicholas, vol. ii.

money. Complaint is likewise made in this petition, on the part of the commons of the county of Louth, that the king's commissioners had issued an order, contrary to law, to assess Aghy Mac Mahon, and other Irish enemies upon that county, to the great oppression and impoverishment of his liege subjects therein; that these Irish refused to accept such food as the complainants themselves used, and were dispersed with their "caifs," nurses, and children, throughout the country, spying by day and night all the woods and fortresses; from whence the greatest possible mischief might hereafter arise.

From a memorandum on the back of this petition, it appears that, in numerous letters written at that time by the earl of Ormond, it was stated that the presence of the king was greatly desired in Ireland. But the thoughts of Henry, throughout his whole reign, were far too anxiously occupied with the care of maintaining and defending his slippery hold of the English crown, to allow him to attend to the government of his Irish realm; and accordingly, though in almost every parliament during his reign, "the danger of Ireland" was remembered, not an effort appears to have been made towards either the correction of that kingdom's turbulence, or the redress of its countless wrongs. All was left to proceed in the same headlong course of mischief which, through more than two centuries, we have now painfully tracked; and the only result at all savouring of justice, that arose out of this chaotic state of things, was the recovery by the injured natives of a considerable portion of their own rightful territories. To such an extent, indeed, had they already won back what belonged to them, that in an address delivered by the speaker of the English house of commons, we find it openly admitted "that the greater part of the lordship of Ireland" had, at this time, been conquered by the natives.*

A law enacted by the parliamant of the Pale, during this reign, shows that their legislation could be sometimes as capricious, as it was almost always tyrannical and unjust. Though giving to the Irishman, on his own soil, the title of "enemy," and invariably treating him as such, they were yet more proud of him, it would seem, as a victim, than afraid of him as an enemy, since, by a law passed during this reign, they deliberately rendered it difficult for a native to quit the kingdom. By an act of their parliament, in the 11th year of this reign, it was ordained that no Irish enemy should be permitted to depart from the realm, without special leave under the great seal of Ireland; and that any subject who should seize the person and goods of a native attempting to transport himself without such license, was to receive one moiety of his goods, while the other was to be forfeited to the crown.†

CHAPTER XL.

HENRY V.

Continuance of warfare between the English and the natives.—Lieutenancy of sir John Talbot—his martial circuit of the borders of the Pale—reduces to submission a great number of the Irish chiefs.—Approbation of his conduct by the lords of the Pale.—Evil consequences of his success.—Intolerant spirit of the English rulers.—Irishmen excluded from the church of the English.—The king summons to his standard in Normandy a body of native Irish.—Their gallant conduct.—Laws against absentees.—The Leinster chief, Mac Morough made prisoner—is sent to London and committed to the Tower.—Impeachment of the archbishop of Cashel.—Petition of grievances from the inabitants of the Pale.

Of the reign we have just reviewed, a great historian‡ has pronounced, that it produced few events worthy of being transmitted to posterity: and if this may be said, with

* Lingard.
† Leland, who refers to MS. Trin. Coll., Dublin.—"Those whom the English refused to incorporate with, subjects, they would yet compel to remain as rebels or slaves . . . . . We have heard of a bridge old for a flying enemy, but an act of parliament to compel him to stand his ground, could only have been ed by an Irish legislature."—*Memoirs of Captain Rock.*
‡ Hume.

truth, of the records of England during that period, we cannot wonder that those of Ireland should be found so blank and valueless. But, barren as are the materials of our history, during the time of the fourth Henry, they are even more trivial and void of interest in the reign of his heroic successor, who, although he had been invested with the honours of knighthood in Ireland, having made there his first essay in arms, does not appear to have at any time afterwards turned his attention to the affairs of that kingdom. A. D. 1413.

After the departure of sir John Stanley, who had succeeded the prior of Kilmainham in the government of Ireland, the nobility elected to the office of lord deputy Thomas Cranley,* archbishop of Dublin; and, during the sitting of a parliament held by him, the the Irish borderers, who always took advantage of these occasions, when the principal lords and gentry were known to be absent from their homes, made a fierce inroad into the Pale, marking their course with fire and waste. To repair the damage caused by this desperate irruption, supplies were demanded of the parliament, which that body refused to grant; and after a session of fifteen days, was dissolved.

A succession of conflicts now ensued between the English and the Irish, in one of which, at a place called Inor, the enterprising Gascon, Janico d'Artois, met with a check; which giving encouragement to the Irish, the lord deputy found it expedient to assume the command of the troops in person. Going no farther with them than Castle Dermod, the venerable prelate remained at that place, along with his clergy, ranged in order of procession, and putting up prayers for the success of his small army. Nor did the event disappoint his hopes, as the result of the conflict, which took place at Kilkea, was victory on the side of the English.

The confidence of the natives, however, in their own strength was now daily increasing; and the English of Meath sustained, this year, a signal defeat from the chieftain O'Connor, with the loss of Thomas, baron of Skrine, slain in the conflict, and two or three other men of rank made prisoners. In consequence of this and other such failures, it was thought expedient to select a military man for the office of chief governor, and sir John Talbot, of Hallamshire, lord of Furnival,† who afterwards so nobly distinguished himself in the wars against France, was appointed lord lieutenant. Landing at Dalkey, this active officer lost no time in proceeding to accomplish the object of his mission; and, hastily collecting whatever troops he found on the spot, as none could be spared to accompany him from England, set out on a martial progress round the borders of the Pale. Beginning with O'Moore, of Ley, the viceroy invaded that chief's territory, and, in the course of two great "hostings," each a week in duration, laid waste, by burning, foraging, and all other modes of devastation, almost the whole of his lands. He also attacked and took by storm two of O'Moore's castles or strong-holds, and having released from thence several English prisoners, put to death the officers of the chief who held them in charge. Thus driven to extremity, O'Moore reluctantly sued for peace, and delivered up his son, in pledge of his faith, to the lieutenant. But still farther humiliation awaited this chief;—he found himself compelled to join with his force the English banner, and assist in inflicting the same havoc and desolation on the territory of a brother chieftain, Mac Mahon. And here a similar result ensued; for, Mac Mahon, also in his turn overpowered, was compelled to follow, with his rude troops, to the attack of two other great Ulster captains, O'Connor and O'Hanlon. In this manner did the English lord pursue his course, making of each successive chief that fell into his hands a tool and scourge for the subjection of his fellows; or, as the letter describing the expedition more briefly expresses it "causing every Irish enemy to serve upon the other."‡ A. D. 1414.

This showy and sweeping achievement occupied altogether about three months; and, although little more, as usual, had been gained by it than the outward form, without any of the reality, of submission, so much satisfaction did it give to the lords and gentlemen of the Pale, that, shortly after, they sent to the king, who was then in France, a certificate, in the French language, expressing their sense of the value of this great public service. It was found eventually, however, that this circuit of the viceroy had been productive of much more evil than good; as the soldiers, being ill paid, were compelled to have recourse to the odious exactions of coyne and livery; and more was suffered by the

* Leland, Cox, and others, have transformed this name into *Crawley*. The inscription on his monument in New College Chapel, at Oxford, ought to have taught them better;—"Flori pontificum, Thomæ Cranley, &c."—See Ware, *Bishops*.

† Lord Furnival by courtesy, through his wife,—having married the eldest daughter of sir Thomas Nevil, by Joan, the sole daughter and heiress of William, the last lord Furnival.

‡ *Original Letters illustrative of English History* edited by sir Henry Ellis, Second Series, vol. i. letter 19.

money. Complaint is likewise made in this petition, on the part of the commons of the county of Louth, that the king's commissioners had issued an order, contrary to law, to assess Aghy Mac Mahon, and other Irish enemies upon that county, to the great oppression and impoverishment of his liege subjects therein; that these Irish refused to accept such food as the complainants themselves used, and were dispersed with their "caifs," nurses, and children, throughout the country, spying by day and night all the woods and fortresses; from whence the greatest possible mischief might hereafter arise.

From a memorandum on the back of this petition, it appears that, in numerous letters written at that time by the earl of Ormond, it was stated that the presence of the king was greatly desired in Ireland. But the thoughts of Henry, throughout his whole reign, were far too anxiously occupied with the care of maintaining and defending his slippery hold of the English crown, to allow him to attend to the government of his Irish realm; and accordingly, though in almost every parliament during his reign, "the danger of Ireland" was remembered, not an effort appears to have been made towards either the correction of that kingdom's turbulence, or the redress of its countless wrongs. All was left to proceed in the same headlong course of mischief which, through more than two centuries, we have now painfully tracked; and the only result at all savouring of justice, that arose out of this chaotic state of things, was the recovery by the injured natives of a considerable portion of their own rightful territories. To such an extent, indeed, had they already won back what belonged to them, that in an address delivered by the speaker of the English house of commons, we find it openly admitted "that the greater part of the lordship of Ireland" had, at this time, been conquered by the natives.*

A law enacted by the parliamant of the Pale, during this reign, shows that their legislation could be sometimes as capricious, as it was almost always tyrannical and unjust. Though giving to the Irishman, on his own soil, the title of "enemy," and invariably treating him as such, they were yet more proud of him, it would seem, as a victim, than afraid of him as an enemy, since, by a law passed during this reign, they deliberately rendered it difficult for a native to quit the kingdom. By an act of their parliament, in the 11th year of this reign, it was ordained that no Irish enemy should be permitted to depart from the realm, without special leave under the great seal of Ireland; and that any subject who should seize the person and goods of a native attempting to transport himself without such license, was to receive one moiety of his goods, while the other was to be forfeited to the crown.†

CHAPTER XL.

HENRY V.

Continuance of warfare between the English and the natives.—Lieutenancy of sir John Talbot—his martial circuit of the borders of the Pale—reduces to submission a great number of the Irish chiefs.—Approbation of his conduct by the lords of the Pale.—Evil consequences of his success.—Intolerant spirit of the English rulers.—Irishmen excluded from the church of the English.—The king summons to his standard in Normandy a body of native Irish.—Their gallant conduct.—Laws against absentees.—The Leinster chief, Mac Morough made prisoner—is sent to London and committed to the Tower.—Impeachment of the archbishop of Cashel.—Petition of grievances from the inabitants of the Pale.

Of the reign we have just reviewed, a great historian‡ has pronounced, that it produced few events worthy of being transmitted to posterity: and if this may be said, with

* Lingard.

† Leland, who refers to MS. Trin. Coll., Dublin.—"Those whom the English refused to incorporate with, as subjects, they would yet compel to remain as rebels or slaves . . . . . We have heard of a bridge of gold for a flying enemy, but an act of parliament to compel him to stand his ground, could only have been passed by an Irish legislature."—*Memoirs of Captain Rock.*

‡ Hume.

truth, of the records of England during that period, we cannot wonder that those of Ireland should be found so blank and valueless. But, barren as are the materials of our history, during the time of the fourth Henry, they are even more trivial and void of interest in the reign of his heroic successor, who, although he had been invested with the honours of knighthood in Ireland, having made there his first essay in arms, does not appear to have at any time afterwards turned his attention to the affairs of that kingdom. A. D. 1413.

After the departure of sir John Stanley, who had succeeded the prior of Kilmainham in the government of Ireland, the nobility elected to the office of lord deputy Thomas Cranley,* archbishop of Dublin; and, during the sitting of a parliament held by him, the the Irish borderers, who always took advantage of these occasions, when the principal lords and gentry were known to be absent from their homes, made a fierce inroad into the Pale, marking their course with fire and waste. To repair the damage caused by this desperate irruption, supplies were demanded of the parliament, which that body refused to grant; and after a session of fifteen days, was dissolved.

A succession of conflicts now ensued between the English and the Irish, in one of which, at a place called Inor, the enterprising Gascon, Janico d'Artois, met with a check; which giving encouragement to the Irish, the lord deputy found it expedient to assume the command of the troops in person. Going no farther with them than Castle Dermod, the venerable prelate remained at that place, along with his clergy, ranged in order of procession, and putting up prayers for the success of his small army. Nor did the event disappoint his hopes, as the result of the conflict, which took place at Kilkea, was victory on the side of the English.

The confidence of the natives, however, in their own strength was now daily increasing; and the English of Meath sustained, this year, a signal defeat from the chieftain O'Connor, with the loss of Thomas, baron of Skrine, slain in the conflict, and two or three other men of rank made prisoners. In consequence of this and other such failures, it was thought expedient to select a military man for the office of chief governor, and sir John Talbot, of Hallamshire, lord of Furnival,† who afterwards so nobly distinguished himself in the wars against France, was appointed lord lieutenant. Landing at Dalkey, this active officer lost no time in proceeding to accomplish the object of his mission; and, hastily collecting whatever troops he found on the spot, as none could be spared to accompany him from England, set out on a martial progress round the borders of the Pale. Beginning with O'Moore, of Ley, the viceroy invaded that chief's territory, and, in the course of two great "hostings," each a week in duration, laid waste, by burning, foraging, and all other modes of devastation, almost the whole of his lands. He also attacked and took by storm two of O'Moore's castles or strong-holds, and having released from thence several English prisoners, put to death the officers of the chief who held them in charge. Thus driven to extremity, O'Moore reluctantly sued for peace, and delivered up his son, in pledge of his faith, to the lieutenant. But still farther humiliation awaited this chief;—he found himself compelled to join with his force the English banner, and assist in inflicting the same havoc and desolation on the territory of a brother chieftain, Mac Mahon. And here a similar result ensued; for, Mac Mahon, also in his turn overpowered, was compelled to follow, with his rude troops, to the attack of two other great Ulster captains, O'Connor and O'Hanlon. In this manner did the English lord pursue his course, making of each successive chief that fell into his hands a tool and scourge for the subjection of his fellows; or, as the letter describing the expedition more briefly expresses it "causing every Irish enemy to serve upon the other."‡ A. D. 1414.

This showy and sweeping achievement occupied altogether about three months; and, although little more, as usual, had been gained by it than the outward form, without any of the reality, of submission, so much satisfaction did it give to the lords and gentlemen of the Pale, that, shortly after, they sent to the king, who was then in France, a certificate, in the French language, expressing their sense of the value of this great public service. It was found eventually, however, that this circuit of the viceroy had been productive of much more evil than good; as the soldiers, being ill paid, were compelled to have recourse to the odious exactions of coyne and livery; and more was suffered by the

* Leland, Cox, and others, have transformed this name into *Crawley*. The inscription on his monument in New College Chapel, at Oxford, ought to have taught them better;—"Flori pontificum, Thomæ Crauley, &c."—See Ware, *Bishops*.

† Lord Furnival by courtesy, through his wife,—having married the eldest daughter of sir Thomas Nevil, by Joan, the sole daughter and heiress of William, the last lord Furnival.

‡ *Original Letters illustrative of English History* edited by sir Henry Ellis, Second Series, vol. i. letter 19.

subjects of the Pale from the revival of this scourge, than they had gained by their slight and temporary advantage over the Irish.

A. D. 1415. On the return of the king to England, after his immortal victory at Azincourt, the Irish parliament, deeming it a moment highly favourable for such an appeal, prepared a petition to be laid before him, stating fully the wants and grievances of his subjects in that realm. There object, however, was frustrated by a most barefaced stretch of power. Laurence Merbury, the lord chancellor, being himself, it is probable, interested in preventing too eager an inquiry into official abuses, refused to affix the great seal to the petition; and thus, in defiance of the will of the legislature, intercepted and set aside their remonstrance.*

It is not a little curious, in perusing the minutes of the king's council for this period, to find France and Ireland alternately figuring as the scenes of English warfare; but it is also melancholy to reflect, that while the rich harvest of princely dominion so gloriously reaped, at that time, in one of these fields, has long since passed away, the fruits of the mischief sown in the other still continue in fresh and baleful luxuriance. Among the minutes of the council relating to Ireland, we find it noted that the king was to be consulted respecting the increase of the number of archers and men-at-arms, for the guard of the Irish marches; and also relating to the equipment of a barge from Chester, with men-at-arms and other soldiers;—the bows and arrows to be provided by lord Furnival, at his own expense. It is suggested, likewise, that cannon should be sent to Ireland for its defence.

A. D. 1417. A petition addressed, this year, to the English parliament, from the king's subjects, in Ireland, exhibits, in its rawest and most unsophisticated form, that hateful spirit of monopoly and exclusion in which the government of that realm was then, and has been almost ever since, administered. The petition, after stating that Ireland was divided into two nations, the English and the Irish, the latter of whom were the king's enemies, proceeds to the chief purport of its prayer, which was, that no Irishman should in future be presented to any ecclesiastical office or benefice; and that no bishops who were of the Irish nation should, on pain of forfeiting their temporalities, collate any clerk of that nation to a benefice, or bring with them to parliaments or councils held in Ireland, any Irish servant. This notable petition, which shows how alert was then the persecuting spirit, and how much mischief it could already effect without any help from religious differences, received from the English parliament a ready assent to its insolent prayer.†

The only symptom shown by Henry during his reign, of any interest in the fortunes of that country where he had first been made a soldier, was his summoning, in the year 1417, when about to invade France for the second time, a small body of native Irish to join him in Normandy, under the command of Thomas Butler, the martial prior of Kilmainham.‡ The feats of valour achieved by this troop of wild warriors, at the siege of Rouen,—so much beyond what could have been expected from so small a force,—naturally led to that overstatement of their numbers which is found in the chroniclers of both nations. "They so did their devoir," says the English chronicler, "that none were more praised, nor did more damage to their enemies;"§ and when, in the following year, the king had got possession of Pontoise, the Irishmen, according to the same authority, "overcame all the Isle of France, and did to the Frenchmen damages innumerable."

In turning, wearily, over the records of these rude times, the eye is occasionally refreshed by glimpses of a somewhat more civilized state of existence, in those grants of leave of absence accorded to particular individuals, to enable them to visit, for the pur-

* "Quod cum in parliamento 4 Hen. V. Thomas Crawley archepisc. Dublin. electus fuit ad proficiendum in Angliam ad Regem cum cunctis mandatis scriptis statum Hibernie concernentem, Laur. Merbury, cancellarius, magnum sigillum eis apponere recusaverit:—cum prece quod dictus Laur. Merbury ponatur ad declarandum cur sic fecit."—*Close Roll, 1 Hen. VI.*

† "Whereas the said land is divided between two nations, that is to say, the said petitioners, English and of the English nation, and the Irish nation, those enemies to our lord the king, who, by crafty designs, secretly, and by open destruction, making war, are continually purposed to destroy the said lieges and to conquer the land, the petitioners pray that remedy thereof be made."

‡ Among the payments entered in the Issue Roll of this year, is the sum of 9*l.* 17*s.*, for "the wages and rewards to masters and mariners of the town of Bristol, for embarking the prior of Kilmainham, 200 horsemen, and 300 foot, from Waterford in Ireland, to go to the king's presence in France."—*Pell Records.*

§ Hall,—who makes their number 1600. They were armed, he says, in mail with darts and skeins, after the manner of their country; and "were appointed to keep the north side of the army, and, in especial, the way that cometh from the forest of Lyons."

The following is Monstrelet's account of this gallant band:—"The king of England had with him in his company a vast number of Irish, of whom the far greatest part went on foot. One of their feet was covered, the other was naked, without having clouts, and poorly clad. Each had a target and little javelins, with large knives of a strange fashion; and those who were mounted had no saddles; but they rode very adroitly their little mountain horses."

poses of study, the schools of Oxford and Cambridge. Others proceeded, with the view of learning the legal profession, to London; and here, the distaste avowed so insultingly by the English towards all connected with Ireland—a feeling extended to those of their own race born in that country—was most strongly and illiberally displayed. By a stretch of tyranny, unknown under former reigns, the Anglo-Irish law-students were now excluded from the inns of court.

The old offence, indeed, of absenteeism, had begun to be regarded in somewhat a new point of view; for whereas, formerly, those offending in this respect were blamed merely for their absence from Ireland, the offence now most strongly protested against, was their presence in England. In some enactments on the subject, during this reign, the effects of the practice are viewed in both these lights. Thus, in the year 1413, it was enacted by the king and parliament, that, "for the peace and quietness of England, and the increase and prosperity of Ireland, all Irishmen, Irish clerks, beggars, &c., should be removed out of England before All Saints following; with the exception of graduates in schools, sergeants and apprentices at law, &c." After a few more such exceptions to this enactment, it is added, farther, that all Irishmen holding offices or benifices in Ireland, should dwell there, for the defence of the land.

In that fierce but inglorious warfare which raged incessantly between the two races, there had occurred nothing till this year deserving of any notice, since the martial circuit of the borders of the Pale, by lord Furnival. A success, however, of some importance, was achieved, at this time, by the same commander, in consequence of which Mac Morough, the captain of Leinster, had fallen into his hands; and how valuable was thought the possession of this representative of the old Lagenian kings is sufficiently manifested, by his being conveyed to London, and committed a prisoner to the Tower. Shortly after, the captain of the sept of the O'Kelly's was taken prisoner by sir William de Burgh, and 500 of his followers slain.

The lord lieutenant, having been summoned to England, left his brother, Richard Talbot, archbishop of Dublin, to act as his deputy; and, in the April of the following year, James, Earl of Ormond, who was appointed lord lieutenant, with very extensive powers, landed at Waterford. The late viceroy, lord Furnival, had, in imitation of some of his predecessors, involved himself deeply in debts, both public and private; and a parliament summoned by the earl of Ormond, soon after his arrival, in addition to subsidies granted to the king, amounting in all to 1000 marks, made provision also for the payment of the public debts contracted by lord Furnival. In none of the proceedings relative to this lord's administration does it seem to have been sufficiently taken into account how very limited were the means placed at his disposal;—the whole of his income for the maintenance of the king's government having amounted, it appears, to little more than two thousand six hundred pounds a-year.* A. D. 1419.

A parliament held in the following year, at Dublin, was rendered remarkable by the solemn impeachment before it of Richard O'Hedian, archbishop of Cashel, upon thirty articles of accusation brought against him by John Gese, bishop of Lismore and Waterford. The principal of these charges were, 1. That he loved none of the English nation, and was very partial to the Irish. 2. That he gave no benefice to any Englishman, and advised other bishops to follow his example. 3. That he had counterfeited the great seal and forged the king's letters patent. 4. That he designed to make himself king of Munster. 5. That he had taken a ring from the image of St. Patrick, which had been an offering of the earl of Desmond, and made a present of it to his concubine.† A. D. 1421.

These charges, which bear upon the face of them the marks of party spirit, were never, it is supposed, prosecuted; having originated, doubtless, in envy of the munificent and popular character of this prelate, who besides his generous feeling towards the natives, so much complained of in these charges, was distinguished also for his zeal and bounty in fostering religious establishments; and, among other public services by which he is honourably remembered, restored, from a state of almost utter dilapidation and ruin, the ancient cathedral of St. Patrick at Cashel.

From the same parliament, a petition, praying for the reformation of the state of the land, was transmitted to the king,‡ through the hands of the archbishop of Armagh and sir Christopher Preston; and the direct insight it affords into the abuses and malpractices then prevailing, opens so clearly to us the internal condition of the Pale at that period,

* "Hibn. Johanni Domino de Furnyvall, locum-tenenti Hiberniæ pro salva custodia ejusdem a xxxo. die Januar. anno secundo usque primum diem Augusti prox. sequen. per dimidium annum 1333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*."—See Ellis's *Original Letters, &c.*

† Ware's Bishops.—Prynne, p. 313.

‡ Close Roll, 1 Henry VI. It appears rather doubtful whether this petition is to be referred to the last year of Henry V. or the first of his successor.

that—in our dearth, especially, of more lively historical materials—such a record is of no ordinary value.

This petition consists of nineteen articles, from which the following are selected, and given nearly as they stand in the original record. 1. Complaint is made of the various extortions, oppressions, non-payments, levies of coyne and livery, practised by the lieutenants and their deputies; and, also, their non-execution of the laws:—all which evils, it is added, are incurable, except by the presence of the king himself. 2. The petitioners state that all the supplies and revenues that had been granted for the purposes of warfare and the defence of the land had been hitherto applied by the king's deputies to their own private uses; and they pray that the king will retain in future, as he does at present, all such revenues in his own hands. 3. They require that there should be a coinage of money in Dublin, in the same manner as in England; and that a mint, with all necessary officers, should be there established. 4. Referring to the submission and homage made to Richard II. by certain of the Irish enemies, and the recognizances entered into by them, payable in the apostolic chamber, to keep their oaths of allegiance, the petitioners pray of the king to certify the same to the pope, in order that he may proceed to enforce strong measures against the offenders.* 5. They complain of the conduct, already noticed, of the lord chancellor Merbury, in refusing to fix the great seal to the petition of the parliament; and pray that he may be required to state his reasons for such refusal. 6. Owing to the wars and the intolerable burdens of the country, the great landholders, the artificers, and workmen, are daily emigrating, they complain, to England, in consequence whereof the land is left uncultivated and undefended: for this they pray some remedy. 7. They state that the late Sir John Stanley, when holding the office of lord deputy, paid little, if any, of his debts, and died enriched by acts of extortion and oppression: they therefore pray that his heirs and executors may be compelled to come into Ireland, to discharge his just debts, and make good his obligations. 8. They extol, as an example worthy of imitation, the conduct of Thomas Cranley, archbishop of Dublin, who had succeeded Stanley as lord justice, and always deported himself in that office benignly and justly. 9. Of sir John Talbot, they allege, that during the period of his government, he was guilty of numerous acts of extortion and cruelty, and paid little, if any, of his debts; and they pray that he also may be compelled to come to Ireland, to discharge his just obligations, and repair the consequences of his oppression. 10. Since the coronation of the present king, no commissioner, they complain, had been sent over to Ireland, as was usual in the times of his predecessors, to make inquiry into the conduct and measures of the lord deputy and other great officers: and they pray, therefore, that such a commission may be now sent. 11. The conduct of their present lord lieutenant, James, earl of Ormond, is praised by them, and held up as an example; because, on entering into his office, he had made a declaration in parliament that he would observe the laws, would pay his just debts, and also, at the close of his administration, would assign over lands without any reserve, until all such debts should be fully and fairly discharged: and likewise because that, through him, the extortion of coyne and livery had been abolished. This earl was prepared, they add, to effect still farther good, if possessed of the means, and they therefore pray of the king that such means should be supplied. 12. They complain that a number of illiterate persons were allowed to hold offices in the exchequer, performing the duties of them by deputy, and receiving from thence great incomes, owing to the excessive fees usually extorted from the suitors in that court. In many instances, two, and even three, places were held by one individual, and the duties of them all, of course, proportionably ill performed. For this they pray the king to grant a remedy. 13. English law students, they complain, going over from Ireland, even though born in the best part of that country, were, by a late regulation, excluded from the inns of court, in England, though in all preceding periods, from the time of the conquest of Ireland, they had been admissible into those societies.

Of the remaining articles of this memorial, the seventeenth alone is of sufficient interest to be cited, wherein complaint is made, that although the statute 3 Ric. II., concerning absentee proprietors, contains an exception in favour of studious persons, it yet daily happened that Irish students, devoting their leisure to learned pursuits, in English schools and universities, were, under colour of said statute, obstructed and annoyed.† It was therefore prayed that a declaration of the real intention of this statute should be certified to the lord deputy and other officers of the Irish government.

During the last year of this reign, a succession of conflicts took place between the

* "Cum prece quod Rex Papam de præmissis certiorem faciat, ad crucidium super eos habendum."

† "Quod, quamvis statutum 3 R. II. de possessionariis absentibus exceptionem continet in favorem studiosorum, tamen studiosi Hibernici, literis in scolis et universitatibus vacantes, colore dicti statuti indies vexantur."

English and the natives, attended with the usual vicissitudes of their warfare on both sides. Some success having been gained by the Irish, in Ley, the lord justice invaded that country, encountered the chieftain O'Moore, and, as the chronicler describes the event, "defeated his terrible army in the Red Bog of Athy."* He then, for the four following days, burned and wasted the lands of the rebels, until they themselves came and sued for peace. About the same time, the chief O'Dempsy, notwithstanding his oath of allegiance, made an irruption into the Pale, and retook the castle of Ley from the earl of Kildare, to whom the lord justice had restored it. In reference to this act of O'Dempsy, an old historian, extending his charge to the Irish in general, remarks, that, notwithstanding their oaths and pledges, "they are no longer true than while they feel themselves the stronger;"—an accusation to which, supposing it to be well founded, we may, with but too much truth, answer, or rather retort, that, if any excuse could be offered for such perfidy, on the part of the Irish, it was to be found in the still grosser perfidy of those with whom they had to deal.

In the mean time Mac Mahon, the chief lord of Orgiel, or Uriel,† had in like manner broken out in full career of devastation. But the indefatigable lord justice, after having disposed of the other insurgent chiefs, reduced Mac Mahon also to obedience; and thus closed this triumphant campaign, during which the clergy of Dublin went twice every week in solemn procession, praying for the success of his arms.

CHAPTER XLI.

HENRY VI.

Alliance by marriage and other ties between the two races.—Adoption by the English of the laws and usages of the natives.—Great power of the Anglo-Irish lords.—Their feuds among themselves.—The earl of March made lord lieutenant.—His death.—Severe measures against absentees.—Romantic marriage of the earl of Desmond—is forcibly deprived of his earldom and estates.—Large grant of lands to his successor.—Articles of accusation against the earl of Ormond.—He is appointed lord lieutenant.—Grants and privileges bestowed upon Desmond. Renewal of the charges against Ormond—is continued at the head of the government.—Sample of Anglo-Irish legislation.—Richard, duke of York, appointed viceroy.—Ormond committed to the tower of London—his intended duel with the prior of Kilmainham—their duel prevented by the interposition of the king.—Recovery by the natives of their territories.—Consequent reduction of the English power and revenue.—Wise and conciliatory policy of York—is called away to England—takes refuge in Ireland after his defeat at Blore Heath—again takes the field, attended by volunteers from Ireland—is defeated and slain at Wakefield.

We have already had occasion to remark, as one of the anomalies that mark the destiny of this nation, how small is the portion of Ireland's history that relates to the affairs of the Irish people themselves. Supplanted, as they were, on their own soil, by strangers and enemies, the task of dictating as well their history as their laws fell early into foreign hands, and the people of the soil, the indigenous Irish, were only remembered, to be calumniated and coerced. In the course of time, however, a new race and new relationships sprang up, from the connexions, by marriage and otherwise, of the English colonists and the natives, which worked a change even more in the political than in the social condition of the country. The conquerors, yielding to these natural ties, were, in their turn, conquered by the force of the national spirit, and became, as was

A. D. 1422.

* Campion,—who adds also a miracle to the event:—"In the Red Bog of Athy (the sun almost lodged in the West, and miraculously standing still in his epicycle the space of three hours, till the feat was accomplished, and no pit in that moor annoying either horse or man, on his part,) he vanquished O'Moore and his terrible army.

† "Of Monaghan (says Ware,) called in Irish, Uriel, Mac Mahon was the chief lord." But, according to Seward, Orgiel, or Uriel, comprised the present counties of Louth, Monaghan, and Armagh.

said in later times, even more Irish than the Irish themselves. Even English gentlewomen had begun to receive, without any repugnance, the tender addresses of the "Irish enemy;" and it appears from letters patent of the reign of Henry IV., that the fierce and formidable chief, Art Mac Morough, could boast of an English heiress for his consort.*

The old laws and customs of the country were deeply, as we have seen, imbued with the primitive character of the people; and, if their law of Eric may be thought overlenient to the crime of murder, and in so far indicating too tolerant a view of acts of violence, their customs of Gossipred and Fostering, on the other hand, evince a generous desire to enlarge the circle of the social affections, by adding to the ties of consanguinity those of long habit and mutual good services. Brought up in general by Irish nurses, and consorting from early childhood with their fosterbrethren, it was not to be expected that the sons of the middle class of the English should remain uninfluenced by examples so constantly acting upon them, and the force of which, through every succeeding generation, must have increased.

Such were, in fact, the effects that naturally began to unfold themselves among the descendants of the great English lords; and all such ancient customs of the land as tended to facilitate the never-ceasing work of plunder and massacre, were, of course, the first and the most eagerly adopted by them. In this manner, the old Irish taxes of coyne and livery, which gave a right to demand free quarters from the soldiery without any responsibility or restraint, and which in a country where warfare was perpetual, could not be otherwise than a perpetual scourge, was first made a part of the military policy of the English by Maurice Fitz-Thomas, afterwards earl of Desmond.†

So soon and to such an extent were the lords of the Pale inoculated with this Irish spirit, that in the reign of Edward III., as we have seen, Nicholas Fitz-Maurice, fourth earl of Kerry, joined openly the ranks of the natives. Attempts were made, but unsuccessfully, in the course of the same reign, to dislodge this growing Anglo-Irish power. But, having taken root so early in the formation of the colony, and established the next best right of possession (though still at an immeasurable distance) to that of the natives themselves, this proud and high spirited race succeeded in baffling all the efforts of the English government to reduce them; and, at the period we have now reached, owing to the distraction of the attention of England to other objects, had attained, in some instances, an extent of ascendency, no less prejudicial to the dignity and interests of the crown, than it was oppressive to the people subjected to their dominion.

Of these great lords, the earl of Ormond, who held the office of lord lieutenant at the time of the accession of Henry VI., was one of the most active and powerful; and a factious feud between him and the Talbots, kept alive, as it was, and diffused by a multitude of adherents on both sides, continued to disturb the public councils through a great part of this reign. Soon after Henry's accession, the office of lord lieutenant was resigned by Ormond to Edward Mortimer, earl of March and Ulster, who appointed as his deputy, until he should be able to assume the government in person, Edward Dantsey, bishop of Meath.‡ When this prelate presented to the council the letters patent of the earl conferring his appointment, strong objections were made to the sufficiency of the commission, on the ground that the letters were sealed with the earl's private seal; and Richard Talbot, archbishop of Dublin, who was then chancellor of the kingdom, peremptorily refused, till farther advised, to acknowledge the bishop as deputy. But this captious opposition, though giving a foretaste of what was to be expected from the bold and thwarting spirit of this prelate, does not appear to have been long persisted in; as, from a subsequent record, we gather, that the council agreed to acknowledge the bishop's appointment.§

Shortly after, announcement was made, by a king's letter to archbishop Talbot, that the earl of March, with a large army, was about to proceed, with all possible despatch, to Ireland;‖ and, in the course of the year 1423, this prince landed on the Irish shores. But the flattering hope held out by his presence was of very

A. D. 1423.

* Pat. Roll, 1 Hen. IV.:—"Una cum hereditate Elizabethe uxoris sue de baronia de Norragh." It is right to add, however, that, in consequence of this marriage the lady's estate was seized on, as a forfeiture, by the crown.

† "But when the English had learned it (the extortion of Coyne and Livery,) they used it with more insolency, and made it more intolerable; for this oppression was not temporary or limited either to place or time; but, because there was every where a continual war, either offensive or defensive, and every lord of a country and every marcher made war at his pleasure, it became universal and perpetual."—*Davies.*

‡ About three years after, a bill of indictment was found against this prelate, at Trim, for stealing a cup of the value of 13*s.* 4*d.* out of the church of Taveragh, in the diocese of Meath. After rather a complicated process, which may be found detailed in Ware (*History of the Bishops,*) he was acquitted of this singular charge, for which it may be presumed there was not the slightest foundation, as, shortly after, he was again entrusted with the high office of lord deputy.

§ The reason given for thus yielding, is "prout in concordia predicta continetur."

‖ "Ad Hiberniam cum magno exercitu cum omni festinatione possibili est venturus.—*Close Roll, 2 Hen. VI.*

brief duration. Whatever expectation might have been formed, from his nearness to the throne, that his administration would have proved both popular and efficient, such anticipations were soon at an end, as at the beginning of the following year he was seized with the plague, and died in his own castle at Trim.

The prince's successor in the administration was the illustrious warrior, lord Talbot; the same whose services in this country, some years before, had received so honourable a testimony from the lords of the Pale, and who afterwards won for himself, in the French wars, the title of the English Achilles. Not quite a year had A. D. 1425. the government been in the hands of this nobleman, when it again fell to the earl of Ormond; and from that period, through the ten following years, there ensued, at intervals nearly annual, a succession of chief governors, during none of whose administrations any event much worthy of notice occurred,—with the sole exception, perhaps, of the lieutenancy of Sir Thomas Stanley, in the course of which some seasonable checks were given to the increasing incursions of the Irish borderers. Taking advantage A. D. 1432. of the distractions consequent on the king's minority, the natives had risen in considerable numbers, and were from every side encroaching on the Pale. The lord lieutenant, however, leading against them the power of Meath and Uriel, made a great slaughter of their force, and took one of their chiefs, Moyle O'Donnell, prisoner.*

The influx of the Irish into England continued, in both countries, to be a constant subject of complaint and legislation; and, in consequence of a petition to the king, presented by the English house of commons, representing the manifold crimes, of every description, committed by the Irish in England, it was enacted, that all persons born in Ireland should quit England within a time limited; exceptions being made in favour of beneficed clergymen, graduates in either university, persons who held lands in England, were married there, or had English parents; and even these to give security for A. D. 1438. their future good behaviour. In the present year, likewise, during the lieutenancy of Lionel lord Wells, while a second law was passed in England, obliging Irishmen to return home, there was likewise a statute made in Ireland, to prevent the passage of any more of them into England.†

Among those powerful Anglo-Irish lords, who, by their own extortion, and the large grants of lands and liberties so recklessly lavished upon them by the crown, had been raised into so many independent counts palatine, the earl of Desmond held at this time the most prominent station.‡ This lord was uncle to Thomas, the sixth earl of Desmond, whose romantic marriage and subsequent fate show how high, in those times, were the notions entertained of noble birth. Returning late one evening from hunting, the young lord, finding himself benighted, sought shelter under the roof of one of his tenants near Abbeyfeal; and seeing, for the first time, his host's daughter, the beautiful Catherine Mac Cormac, became so enamoured of her charms, that he soon after married her. So dishonouring to the high blood of the Desmonds was this alliance considered, that it drew down upon him the anger and enmity of all his family. Friends, followers, and tenants at once abandoned him; and even assisted his uncle James, according to the old Irish custom, to expel him from his estates, and force him to surrender the earldom.§ Thus persecuted the unhappy young lord retired to Rouen, in Normandy, where he died in the year 1420, and was buried in a convent of friars preachers, at Paris;—the king of England, it is added, attending his funeral.

In addition to his other princely possessions, the present earl of Desmond received, at this time, a grant from Robert Fitz-Geoffry Cogan, of all his A. D. 1439. lands in Ireland; being no less than half of what was then called the kingdom of Cork;—an estate which ought to have descended by the heirs general to the Carew and Courcy families, but which the illegal conveyance from Cogan afforded to Desmond a pretence for appropriating to himself.‖

While thus this lord and a few other Anglo-Irish nobles were extending enormously their power and wealth, the king's government was fast declining as well in revenue as in influence and strength. Sir Thomas Stanley, when lord lieutenant, had brought over to England a most wretched account of the state of affairs from the privy council, where-

* Cox. † Ibid.

‡ Among the services by which Desmond rose into such favour, was the activity shown by him, in the first year of this reign, when, raising an army of 3000 men, in Munster, he marched against O'Connor and Moyler Bermingham, who, with a large force, had broken into the borders of the Pale.—*Pat. Roll*, 1 *Hen. VI.*

§ This forcible succession, however, does not appear to have been immediately recognised by the crown, as, in a letter to John lord Furnival, cited by Lynch (*Legal Institutions*, &c.,) the new earl is merely called James of Desmond.

‖ Lodge.—Smith, *Hist. of Cork*, vol. i. book i. chap. 1.

A. D. 1442. in, entreating that the king himself would come to Ireland, they added, that his presence would be a sovereign comfort to his people, and the surest remedy for all the evils of which they complained. So little did this state of things improve, that a few years after, in the time of the lieutenancy of lord Wells, a parliament held in Dublin agreed to send over archbishop Talbot, to represent to the king the miserable condition of Ireland; and to state in proof of it, that the public revenue of the kingdom fell short of the necessary expenditure by the annual sum of 1456*l.**

During a part of the period of lord Wells' lieutenancy, Ormond condescended to act as his deputy; and, during that interval, had a grant made to him of the temporalities of the see of Cashel for ten years.† Seeing reason to fear that this highly favoured and popular nobleman would be himself again selected to fill the office of chief governor, the

A. D. 1441. party opposed to him, at the head of which was the intractable archbishop Talbot, resolved to defeat, if possible, an appointment so utterly adverse to all their designs. With this view, in a parliament assembled at Dublin, certain "Articles" were agreed to, and messengers appointed to convey them to the king, of which the chief object was to prevent Ormond from being made lieutenant of Ireland.‡

These articles commenced with requesting the king to "ordain a mighty lord of England" to be the lieutenant;—adding, that they, the parliament considered it most expedient to confer that office upon an English lord, because the people would more readily "favour and obey him than any man of that land's birth;" inasmuch as Englishmen "keep better justice, execute the laws, and favour more the common people, than any Irishman ever did, or is ever like to do." The articles then represent how necessary it is that the lieutenant should be an active and courageous man, such as would "keep the field and make head against the king's enemies: none of which qualities," it is added had been "seen or found in the said earl, for both he is aged, unwieldy, and unlusty to labour, and hath lost in substance all his castles, towns, and lordships that he had in Ireland. Wherefore it is not likely that he should keep, conquer, nor get any grounds to the king, that thus hath lost his own."

To these general charges against the earl are subjoined specific instances of his maladministration and abuse of power: and among others, it is stated, that when he before governed Ireland, he "had made Irishmen, and grooms, and pages of his household, knights of the shire;‖ that he had allowed peers to absent themselves from parliament on payment of large fines, which he applied to his own instead of the king's use; that he had put several persons wantonly in prison, and then made them pay large sums for their ransom." The king is reminded, in conclusion, that Ormond had been "impeached of many great treasons by the three previous lord lieutenants, which charges still remained undetermined;" and the arch-bishop adds, speaking in his own person, "here have been also "many and divers other great things misdone by the said earl, which I may not declare because of mine order."

Strongly enforced as were these charges, and containing much, that, with all due allowance for party malice, may have deserved reprehension, if not punishment, it appears from the result, that but little importance was attached to the proceeding by the English council. For it was at the close of the year 1441, that these articles of impeach-

A. D. 1442. ment were laid before the king, and in the 20th of February following, the earl of Ormond was appointed lieutenant of Ireland, with the peculiar privilege, too, of absenting himself from his government for many years, without incurring the penalty of the statute of R. II. against absentees.*

The effects of the triumph gained by Ormond over his accusers were shared in also by his powerful friend and supporter. Desmond, on whom, already enriched and aggrandized beyond what was safe in a subject, new favours and new distinctions were now showered. It was about this time that he obtained a patent for the government and cus-

* There was [illegible] during the reign [illegible] more extraordinary increase of the hereditary revenue of the crown [illegible] than the sum [illegible] of two thousand pounds."

† "After the death of archbishop Chichester the see of Salisbury was two years vacant, and the temporalities [illegible] were all that time in the hands of the king." Ware, Bishops.

‡ Proceedings and Ordinances of the Irish Council, in England, etc.

‖ From what [illegible] of the articles [illegible] we may easily believe that [illegible] might not have been a wholly unjust foundation. In a letter addressed [illegible] to the duchess of Norfolk, [illegible] Talbot's adherents also represents to them, how [illegible] "that we were about to have a parliament, such persons as belong unto him, and be of his mere servants." See on this point, Wright's [illegible] *Hist. of England*, vol. ii. chap. 2.) who gets rid of the difficulty by observing that "most of the Irish peers, was a word" which had scarcely any portion of its present sense.

(Proceedings of the Irish Council.

* Patent Rolls.

tody of the counties of Waterford, Cork, Limerick, and Kerry;* and, not long after a privilege was accorded to him, no less remarkable in itself, than for the grounds on which it was granted. Having represented to the king the necessity he was under of directing in person the affairs of these counties, and likewise the dangers to which he was exposed in travelling to parliament, through parts of the country inhabited solely by the king's enemies, he obtained permission, during his life, to absent himself from all future parliaments, sending an authorized and competent proxy in his place; and upon this license was founded the privilege claimed by the succeeding earls of Desmond, of not entering into walled towns, nor attending any parliament, except at their pleasure.†

In the same patent which granted this whimsical exemption, there was also a power given to him to purchase any lands he pleased, by whatsoever service they were holden of the crown;—a license intended, it was supposed, to screen his late illegal grant from Cogan, and which, by the lax notions it gave rise to, respecting titles and inheritances, tended to unsettle very much the rights and relations of property throughout the kingdom.

Mean while the dissension between Ormond and archbishop Talbot continued to occupy public attention, and, as a letter of the council expresses it, "to cause divisions and rumours among the king's people." To Giles Thorndon, therefore, who was then treasurer of Ireland, and less closely connected, perhaps, than most of his official brethren, with either of the two contending factions, was assigned the duty of collecting and laying before the king a correct account of the state of affairs in that realm. The articles drawn up, in obedience to this order,‡ by Thorndon, confirm but too strongly the painful impression, which all other existing records of those times convey, of the strife, turbulence, and unprincipled faction which then prevailed as well among the ruling powers of the land, as throughout the whole of its divided and distracted population. Attributing the "discord, partiality and division," which had been so long raging, not less to one of the prevailing factions than the other, he states that, in consequence of these dissensions, the spirit of party had become so violent in the king's council, and in all his courts, that "no business, whether for the royal service, or for suit of party, was allowed due process, nor execution in law, where it touched any of the said two parties." He stated, likewise, that the officers of the exchequer durst not adopt legal measures for recovering money due to the king, from the fear of being dismissed from their offices at every new change of lord lieutenant or lord justice; and that such was also the case in all the courts of law.§ A. D. 1442.

In these articles, which are of considerable length, and contain several other instances of the effects of faction and misgovernment, no particular charge is alleged against any individual, of either party. But early in the year 1444, in consequence of a difference between the two factions respecting the appointment of a deputy treasurer, a formal complaint was exhibited by Thorndon against the earl, in a bill of fifteen articles, charging him with having appropriated part of the revenue to his own purposes, and also compromised debts due to the crown. Among the instances brought in proof of this latter charge, it is stated that an English rebel, who had been guilty of slaying sir Richard Wellesley, in the field, having agreed with the council to pay forty marks for his pardon, the earl received this sum from him, appropriated it to his own use, and then granted the pardon for a fine of 6*s.* 8*d.*;—thus "deceivably," it is added, "making the king lose forty marks."‖ A. D. 1444.

Another accusation brought against him in these articles was, that he had proposed a bill to the commons in two parliaments and two great councils, declaring that "whoever complained to the king of any wrong done to him in Ireland, should forfeit all his lands and goods, unless the complaint was made under the great seal, or by an act of parliament, or great council." The object of this bill, it is added, was to benefit Ormond himself, and by the following notable contrivance:—on the lands thus forfeited becoming the property of the crown, the earl would nominally grant them to some friend of his own, who would re-grant them to Ormond and his heirs; and if, on the other hand, persons whose lands and goods were seized did not complain, the earl would be able to retain them as long as he continued lieutenant. The commons, however (adds Thorndon,) knowing well the corrupt and evil intent of the lieutenant, rejected the bill, and upon

* These counties had been in reality possessed by the Desmonds ever since the reign of Edward II., when, says Davies, the greatest part of the freeholders "were banished out of the counties of Kerry, Limerick, Cork, and Waterford, and Desmond and his kinsmen, allies and followers, which were then more Irish than English, did enter and appropriate those lands to themselves; Desmond himself taking what scopes he liked best, for his demeanes in every county, and reserving an Irish seigniory out of the rest."

† Cox.—Lodge.

‡ Minutes of the Proceedings of the Privy Council, vol. v. § Ibid. ‖ Ibid.

the sound and constitutional grounds, that "it was treason to make a statute to prevent a man from complaining to his king."*

Notwithstanding all these vehement and repeated attacks upon him, Ormond still continued lord lieutenant through the following two years, and on the 17th of July,
A. D. 1446. 1446, was succeeded by John Talbot, earl of Shrewsbury, who in consideration of his great military services, was soon after advanced to the dignity of earl of Waterford† and baron of Dungarvan.‡ It ought not to be forgotten, as a worthy sample of the legislation of this period, that, in a parliament held by this earl, at Trim, 1447, it
A. D. 1447. was enacted, that "any man who does not keep his upper lip shaved, may be treated as an Irish enemy."§ Another enactment of the same parliament was that "if an Irishman who is denizened kill or rob, he may be used as an Irish enemy, and slain on the spot."

The practice of conferring the lieutenancy of Ireland on some personage of the royal blood, though hitherto attended with but little advantage, appears to have been still a favourite experiment; and the duke of York, the lineal heir to the crown of England, though as yet his claim had remained latent, was the personage selected for that office.
A. D. 1449. This prince was nephew to the last earl of March, who died in Ireland, at the commencement of this reign, and from whom he inherited the united estates of Clarence and Ulster, together with the patrimonial possessions of the family of March. The list of his titles sufficiently shows how large was the stake he possessed in that country; as, besides being earl of Ulster and Cork, he was lord of Connaught, Clare, Trim, and Meath,—thus including in his inheritance at least a third part of the kingdom. It was not, however, through any wish of his own that he had now been selected for the office of viceroy. On the contrary, recalled abruptly from France, where some years before he had succeeded the duke of Bedford as regent, it was most reluctantly he exchanged the prospects which that honourable field of enterprise opened, for the confined sphere of Irish warfare, and the yet more petty and inglorious strife of the rival factions of the English Pale.

Well aware that he had been removed from his command to make way for the duke of Somerset, his hereditary jealousy of the house of that nobleman, from whence alone he could fear competitorship for the crown, became from thenceforth increased; and, turning to account the slight thus thrown upon him, he resolved to secure for himself such a hold on the warm affections of the Irish as might enable him to render them subservient to the advancement of his farther purposes. He also refused to accept the office on any but high and advantageous terms, which were reduced to writing by indenture between the king and himself, and besides extending the period of his lieutenancy to ten years, and allowing him, in addition to the revenue of the crown in Ireland, supplies of treasure also from England, agreed that he might let the king's lands to farm, might place and displace all officers as he chose, might levy and wage what number of soldiers he thought fit, and appoint a deputy, and return to England at his pleasure.

The duke's predecessor, the earl of Shrewsbury, had, immediately on his return to England, accused Ormond to the king of treason, in consequence of which charge, this earl was committed to the Tower, and strictly prohibited, unless with the royal permission, from going above forty miles from London, except on a pilgrimage to Canterbury. The same serious charge had been advanced against him in a tract written upon the
A. D. 1446. abuses of his government, by archbishop Talbot.‖ But the most fiery of Ormond's accusers on this occasion was Thomas Fitz-Thomas, prior of Kilmainham, who having likewise impeached him of treason, the earl appealed to arms, and a day was appointed to decide their quarrel by combat. In the mean time Ormond obtained permission to remove to the neighbourhood of Smithfield, "for his breathing and more ease," and likewise in order to prepare and train himself for the fight; while the warlike prior employed the interval in learning "certain points of arms" from one Philip Trehere, a fishmonger of London, whom the king paid to instruct him.¶ The parties met, it ap-

* Proceedings of the Privy Council.

† The following addition to this grant presents a melancholy picture of the state of Ireland at that period:—"together with jura regalia, wreck, &c., from Youghall to Waterford, because that country is waste, *et non ad proficuum sed perditum nostrum redundat.*"

‡ This transfer from Desmond of the barony of Dungarvan, so long the inheritance of his ancestors, was, doubtless, one of the consequences of his wilful seclusion from public life. In the following reign, however, the honour of Dungarvan was restored to the Desmond family.

§ This absurd act remained unrepealed till the second year of the reign of Charles I.

‖ Entitled "De Abusu Regiminis Jacobi Comitis Ormoniæ, dum esset Locum-tenens Hiberniæ."—See Ware's *Writers*.

¶ In the Issue Roll of this year, we find payments to Philip Trehere, fishmonger, "in consideration of the pains and attendance undergone by him, at the king's special command, in instructing the prior of Kilmay-

pears, on the ground, but were prevented from proceeding to extremities by the interposition of the king.*

The duke of York was not long in discovering that his Irish revenues would afford him but a scanty supply; the English power having now shrunk within such narrow limits, that, with the exception of the four counties of the Pale, and some parts of the earldom of Ulster, on the sea coast, the whole country was at this time possessed by the natives.† While thus disappointed of the revenues counted upon from that kingdom, he found the supplies from England likewise ill paid; and how great were the straits to which he was reduced may be collected from a letter addressed by him to his brother, the earl of Salisbury, during a petty war he was engaged in with the chief Mac Geoghegan, and three or four other Irish lords.‡ These chiefs, it appears, in conjunction with some English rebels, had burnt down a large town, called Rathmore,—belonging to the duke, as part of his inheritance, in Meath,—together with a number of the adjoining villages, where, it is added, they had "murdered and burnt both men, women, and children, without mercie." After detailing these events in his letter to Salisbury, he proceeds to say, "Unless my payment be had in all haste, to have men of war in defence and safeguard of this land, my power cannot stretch to keep it in the king's obeisance; and very necessity will compel me to come into England, to live there upon my poor livelihood. I had liever be dead than any inconvenience should fall thereunto by my default; for it shall never be chronicled nor remain in scripture (by the grace of God) that Ireland was lost by my negligence. And therefore I beseech you, right worshipful, and with all my heart entirely beloved brother, that you will hold to your hands instantly, that my payment may be had at this time in eschewing all inconveniences."

The same conscientious sense of duty which breathes so strongly throughout this letter, appears to have pervaded the whole of this amiable prince's conduct, as well in France as in Ireland; and the firm but fair spirit in which, as far as we can learn, he dealt with the natives, treating them as enemies only while they resisted, and repressing without also insulting and trampling upon them, afforded an example worthy of imitation by all succeeding chief governors. In reducing Mac Geoghegan to obedience, so well had he managed to divest the transaction of all appearance of harsh or humiliating compulsion, that the simple chief himself, on returning among his sept, boasted proudly that he "had given peace to the king's lieutenant."

Equally politic was the viceroy's conduct and deportment towards those Anglo-Irish grandees, on the skilful management of whom depended mainly the peace and well-being of the kingdom. Having a son born in the castle of Dublin,—George, afterwards duke of Clarence, known for his short stormy life and singular death,—he chose the earls of Ormond and Desmond to be sponsors for the young prince; thus connecting himself with these two powerful lords by the tie, so sacred among the Irish, of gossipred, and thereby furnishing them with an additional motive for zeal and fidelity in his service.

But the aspect of affairs in England had now begun to foretoken events, in the ultimate issue of which the future fortunes of the house of York were most deeply involved. The formidable insurrection that had just broken out, headed by an Irishman named John Cade, proposed for its object, as some of the conspirators confessed on the scaffold, to place Richard duke of York on the throne of England; and by the court it was even imagined that this prince had secretly encouraged Cade's rebellion, in order to sound the feelings of the people, and learn how far they were likely to support him in his pretensions to the crown. Apprised speedily of this state of affairs by some of those friends he had left to watch over his interests, and who were now of opinion that he ought to appear on the scene in person, the duke, without waiting to ask permission left his government, and landing in England, proceeded, to the great terror of the court, towards London, having collected on his way a retinue of about 4000 men. A. D. 1450.

The important affairs in which this prince was subsequently concerned fall mostly within

nam, who lately appealed the earl of Ormond of high treason, in certain points of arms." Another item of disbursement about the same time, shows how frequently Smithfield was the scene of such conflicts. "To sir Richard Vernon, knight, for the cost of sixty men-at-arms, provided for the protection of Smithfield, during the time of the duels fought there between divers parties."

* Stow,—who adds, that the king interfered "at the instance of certain preachers and doctors of London."

† Davies.

‡ Holinshed.—Another letter, without date, but supposed also to belong to the times we have reached, and purporting to be addressed by some inhabitants of the city and county of Cork, to the king's council in Dublin, describes, in a truly Irish tone, the state of affairs in that county. Tracing the ruin of the English interests in those parts to the dissensions of the great nobles, the letter proceeds to say, "At last these English lords fell at variance among themselves, till the Irish men were stronger than they, and drove them away, and now have the whole county under them; but that the lord Roche, the lord Courcy, and the lord Barry only remain, with the least part of their ancestors' possessions; and young Barry in there upon the king's portion, paying his grace never a penny rent."

the province of English history. But as he remained to the last connected with Ireland, and still carried with him the good wishes and sympathy of her people, a few of the more important stages of his course may not irrelevantly be noticed. At the battle of
A. D. 1455. St. Albans, the first of that series of sanguinary conflicts, which for thirty years after kept England torn and convulsed, the fortune of the day declared for York, and the king himself fell into his hands. Appointed twice Protector of the realm, on neither occasion does he appear to have availed himself of those opportunities of increasing and strengthening his own power, which the position attained by him presented, and of which a more ambitious or less conscientious person would not have hesitated to take advantage. Accordingly his conduct, through the whole of this struggle, wore that appearance of irresolution and changeableness which the honest workings of a cautious and scrupulous mind would be sure, in a crisis so trying, to present.

The dispersion of the Yorkists, after their defeat at Blore Heath, and the panic and distrust which then spread through their ranks, having rendered their cause for a time hopeless, the enterprising Warwick, who had been the soul of the late confederacy, made his way back to Calais, while the duke of York fled through Wales, with his youngest son, to Ireland, and was there received with all that enthusiasm which his cause and character had excited, not only among the people of the Pale, but even in the hearts of the poor ill-treated natives themselves.

In the course of the eight years during which he had been absent from that country, a succession of deputies had been appointed by him; among whom the most conspicuous were James V., earl of Ormond (who, before his father's death, had been created earl of Wiltshire,) and Thomas, earl of Kildare. By most of these governors parliaments were held, of which the enactments are still on record; but confined as was now the sphere through which the power of the government of the Pale extended, the acts of its parliament, except when illustrative of the general state of the country, are little worthy of historical notice.

By one of those anomalies not unfrequent in the relations between the two countries, at the very time when the duke was resuming his duties as viceroy in Ireland, the parliament of England was employed in passing an act of attainder against him, his duchess, and their two sons. But the cause of the White Rose was now manifestly on the eve of triumph, having rallied around its banner, not merely the partisans of the House of York, but the great bulk of the English nation, who saw, in the persons and principles composing that party, the best guarantee for the preservation of their own religious and political rights. Encouraged by this sound popular feeling,* the Yorkist lords prepared for another great effort, and, notwithstanding that a strong fleet, under the duke of Exeter, was
A. D. 1460. guarding the channel, Warwick ventured to cross it from Calais, to concert measures with the duke of York, who was still at Dublin, waiting the turn of events, and (as the letter of a cotemporary describes him) "strengthened with his earls and homagers."†

In the month of July, this year, was fought the decisive battle of Northampton, in which the royalists were defeated, a number of the first nobility and gentry of that party slain, and the king himself made prisoner. The duke delayed not to take advantage of this prosperous turn in the fortunes of his cause. Hastening to London, where he made his entry with trumpets sounding, an armed retinue, and a drawn sword borne before him, he presented himself to the house of peers, and, for the first time, advanced, publicly, his claim to the crown.

After grave and frequent discussions, the peers pronounced the title of York to be certain and indefeasible; but at the same time proposed, as a compromise, to satisfy the consciences of both parties, that Henry should retain the crown for the term of his natural life, and that York and his heirs should succeed to it after Henry's death. This proposition was agreed to on both sides; and the path to the throne now seemed to lie open to him, if not already under his feet, when a desperate effort on the part of the queen, assisted by the northern barons, to assert her family's rights, in which she was aided by the northern barons, led to a battle in the neighbourhood of Wakefield, in which
A. D. 1460. the duke, who had under him a force far inferior in numbers to that of the enemy, was either killed in the course of the action, or taken and beheaded on the spot. Near 3000 of his troops, with most of their leaders, fell in this hard-fought but unequal

* A remarkable evidence of this public feeling is found in the articles of the men of Kent, first noticed, I believe, by Mr. Turner, whose unwearied researches in the rich mine of his country's records have enabled him to add largely to our materials of historical knowledge.—See *History of England during the Middle Ages*, vol. iii. c. 10.

† "The duke of York is at Dublin, strengthened with his earls and homagers, as ye shall see by a bill."—Fenn's *Original Letters*, let. 46.

conflict, and among them were a great number of Irish, who had attended their popular viceroy into England.*

Had this excellent prince, who was killed in the fiftieth year of his age, lived to ascend the throne, the knowledge acquired by him of the state of Ireland during his residence in that country, and the general respect entertained for his character among the inhabitants of the Pale, might have enabled him to extend his views beyond that limited circle, to spread the blessings of equal laws and good government among the natives, and adopt the best mode of inspiring them with a love of humanity and justice, by stamping the impress of those qualities upon the laws by which they were governed. As it was, so audacious and formidable had the inroads of the Irish borderers now become, that, instead of being aggressors, the proud colonists of the Pale had been reduced to the humiliating necessity of standing on the defensive; and one of the many public services rendered by the duke during his lieutenancy was the erection of castles on the borders of Louth, Meath, and Kildare, to check the incursions of the natives.

Towards the great Anglo-Irish lords, the conduct of York had been at once liberal and politic, more especially in the instance of Ormond, who was a devoted adherent of the house of Lancaster; and yet between him and the earl of Kildare, a decided Yorkist, the duke divided equally his confidence, leaving the sword of office at one time with the earl of Ormond, at another, with Kildare; and when he fell in battle at Wakefield, there were slain under his banner several members of both these noble families.

CHAPTER XLII.

EDWARD IV.

Reduced state of the English power.—Predatory inroads of the natives—black rent paid to the chiefs.—The Geraldines high in favour.—Lavish grants to the earl of Desmond—his munificent spirit—is succeeded in the government by Tiptoft, earl of Worcester.—This lord's hostility to Desmond—brings charges against him of high treason.—Desmond arrested and beheaded.—Act of attainder against the Geraldines.—Earl of Kildare restored by the king and made lord deputy.—Institution of the brotherhood of St. George.—The house of Ormond again in favour.—Kildare removed from the government—his family regain their ascendency.—Gerald, the eighth earl, appointed lord deputy.—Marriage of his sister with Con O'Neill.—Decline of the Irish revenue.

So small was the portion of the inhabitants of Ireland by whom the authority of English law was now acknowledged, that, from the four small shires alone which constituted the territory of the Pale† were all the lords, knights, and burgesses that composed its parliament summoned; and in no other part of the kingdom but those for shires did the king's writ run. Nor, even there, was the English law allowed to come fairly into operation, as, on the borders and marches, which had at this time so much extended as to include within them half Dublin, half Meath, and a third part of Kildare, no law was in force but that which had been long since forbidden by the statute of Kilkenny, as "a lewd custom," under the denomination of March Law. A. D. 1469.

* "Which policy of his took such effect, as he drew over with him into England the flower of all the English colonies, specially of Ulster and Meath, whereof many noblemen and gentlemen were slain with him at Wakefield."—*Davies.*

† The designation of the English territory by the name of "the Pale," does not appear to have come into use before the beginning of this century, and the term is, in general, supposed to have been confined to the four counties of Dublin, Louth, Kildare, and Meath,—the latter including also West Meath. But, however reduced were the English limits at the period we have now reached, the Pale originally, it is clear, extended from the town of Wicklow in the south, to the point of Dunluce in the north of Ireland;—thus making Louth (as it was not unfrequently styled) the "heart" of the Pale. See Spenser (*View of the State of Ireland,*) who describes the Pale as having once included Carrickfergus, Belfast, Armagh, and Carlingford, "which are now (he adds) the most outbounds and abandoned places in the English Pale, and indeed not counted of the English Pale at all; for it stretcheth now no farther than Dundalk towards the north."

So much had the just and generous character of York's policy endeared him personally to the lords and gentry of the Pale, that, as we have seen, numbers of them accompanied him, on his last expedition into England; and the natives, availing themselves of the absence of these great landed lords,—as they had done once before, in the reign of Richard II.,—took forcible possession of several estates, which were never after recovered from them. It was, doubtless, in reference to some such depredations, committed, in the course of this year, on the duke's Irish adherents, that one of the charges brought against the late king was his having written, at the instigation of divers lords about him, secret letters to some of the "Irish enemy," inciting them to attempt the conquest of the land of Ireland.*

But the fierce septs surrounding the Pale were sufficiently ready, without any such extraneous encouragement, to take advantage of the general confusion and distraction to which the contest for the English crown had given rise; and the wretched inhabitants of the districts bordering upon the Irish were forced to purchase a precarious exemption from their inroads by annual pensions to their chiefs. There is still on record a list of these disgraceful contributions, in which are given, together with the amount of the several pensions, the names of the chieftains who received them, and of the counties by which they were paid.†

Such was the miserable state of weakness, disorganization, and turbulence, in which Edward IV. found his kingdom of Ireland on his accession to the throne. At the time of that event, the office of lord justice was held by Thomas, earl of Kildare; but, on the duke of Clarence, the king's brother,‡ being appointed lieutenant for life, Sir Rowland Fitz-Eustace, afterwards lord Portlester, was sent over as that prince's deputy. We have seen that the Butlers and the Geraldines—under which latter title were comprised the two noble families of Desmond and Kildare—had, in the true spirit of hereditary rivalry, fought on opposite sides in the great struggle between the two rival Roses. Among the most distinguished victims to the late triumph of the Yorkists, was James earl of Ormond, who, having been made prisoner in the bloody battle of Towton, was, in a few weeks after, beheaded; and, throughout a great part of Edward's reign, all belonging to the family of Ormond remained in disgrace. It was not among the least, indeed, of the fatalities of this ill-starred land, that the two most powerful of her native families, instead of combining their strength and influence to promote her peace and welfare, should thus but have added the hateful consequences of their own endless feud to all the other countless evils of which their country had been made the victim.

A. D. 1461, 1462.

At present, the fortunes of the Geraldines were, of course, in the ascendant,—though destined, ere long, to undergo a disastrous eclipse. In the year 1463, the earl of Desmond succeeded lord Portlester, as deputy of the duke of Clarence; and held two parliaments in the course of his government, one at Wexford and another at Trim, which latter passed, among other measures, the following significant enactments:—"That any body may kill thieves or robbers, or any person going to rob or steal, having no faithful men of good name and in English apparel in their company."—"That the Irish within the Pale shall wear English habit, take English names, and swear allegiance, upon pain of forfeiture of goods."§

A. D. 1463.

By the same parliament a statute was passed, granting to Desmond the custody and defence of the castles and towns of Carlow, Ross, Dunbar's Island, and Dugarvan,‖ which last named barony had before been granted to the earl of Shrewsbury, but owing to his negligence, as the statute implies, was brought once more under the authority of the Desmond family. To this favour succeeded another, in the following year, when the

* Stow.—"*Item:* Where the king hath now no more livelode of his realm of England, but onely the land of Ireland and the towr of Caleis, and that no king christened hath such a land and a town without his realm, divers lords have caused his highness to write letters, under his privy seal, unto his Irish enemies, which never king of England did heretofore, whereby they may have comfort to enter into the conquest of the said land, which letters the same Irish enemies sent unto me, the said duke of York, and marvelled greatly that any such letters should be to them sent, speaking therein great shame and villany of the said realme."—*Articles sent from the Duke of York to the Earls, to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and to the Commons.*

† Cox.—The annual sum paid to each chief was of course proportioned to his means and opportunities of doing mischief. The following items will give some notion of the whole list. "The barony of Lecale, to O'Neill of Clandeboy, per ann., 20 lib.—The county of Uriel, to O'Neill, per ann., 40 lib.—The county of Meath, to O'Connor, per ann., 60 lib. The county of Kildare, to O'Connor, per ann., 20 lib." &c. &c.

‡ Spenser confounds strangely this duke of Clarence with the prince Lionel, duke of Clarence, third son of Edward III., who married the earl of Ulster's daughter.

§ Another of the enactments was, "That English, and Irish speaking English and living with the English, shall have an English bow and arrows, on pain of two-pence."

‖ Stat. Roll. Chan. Dub. 3. Ed. IV.,—cited by Lynch *Legislative Institutions.*

king granted, by letters patent, to Desmond, a large annuity chargeable on the principal seignories belonging to the crown within the Pale.* In the same year, this earl A. D. founded the noble establishment called the College of Youghall,† endowing it with 1464. several benefices and a considerable landed estate, which formed, in later times, a part of the immense possessions of the first earl of Cork. Shortly after, too, at the instance of this spirited nobleman, a parliament convened by him at Drogheda, founded a university in that town, with privileges similar to those enjoyed by the university of Oxford.‡

Thus distinguished, as well by the royal favour, as by that influence and popularity among the natives which his Irish birth and munificent spirit were sure to win for him, the good fortune of this powerful lord might seem secure from all reverse. But A. D. the very prosperity of his lot formed also its peril; and the designs of his enemies, 1467. which had been held in check as long as he continued to be lord deputy, were resumed with fresh vigour and venom on the arrival of his successor, the celebrated lord Worcester, who, in addition to the natural cruelty of his character,§ came strongly prepossessed, it is supposed, with the suspicions and jealousies then commonly entertained towards the great Anglo-Irish lords.‖ It was, indeed, natural, as we have before had occasion to remark, that the high official personages sent over from England should regard with jealousy the dominion exercised by those lords of Irish birth, whose hold on the hearts of their fellow-countrymen lent them a power such as mere official rank could never attain. In the instance of Desmond, too, this suspicious or envious feeling found more than ordinary ground for its workings;—the rare combination, in this lord's position, of immense wealth, royal patronage, and popular favour, having justified in many respects the epithet bestowed upon him of the "great" earl of Desmond.

In order to account for the ease and despatch with which so towering a structure of station was laid low, it has been said that he had provoked the vengeance of the queen by advising Edward not to marry her;¶ a secret disclosed, it is added, in the course of some slight altercation between her and the king, by his saying pettishly that "had he taken cousin Desmond's advice, her spirit would have been more humble." It is also stated that the queen, to make sure of her revenge, obtained by stealth the privy seal, and affixed it herself to the order for his execution. But these stories rest on mere idle rumour; and it appears clearly, even from the scanty evidence extant on the subject, that by no other crimes than those of being too Irish and too popular, did Desmond draw upon himself the persecution of which he so rapidly fell the victim.

We have seen that, by the memorable statute of Kilkenny, the customs of gossipred and fostering, together with the intermarriages of the English among the Irish, were declared to be high treason. On this statute the accusations now brought against Desmond were founded; the charge of "alliance with the Irish" being made an additional and prominent article in the impeachment, though, for a length of time, so much had the law relaxed its rigour with regard to this offence, that it was not unusual as we have seen, to grant licenses to the English, on the borders, empowering them to treat, traffic, and form alliances with the natives. In the south, where this earl's estates lay, the laws against intercourse or alliance with the Irish had long fallen into disuse; and it was chiefly the connexions formed by this family with some of the leading Irish chiefs that had hitherto enabled the successive earls of Desmond to uphold the king's authority in the greater part of Munster.

By none, however, of these considerations were the bitter enemies of the Geraldine race induced to forego their stern and factious purpose; and one of the most rancorous of the earl's foes was William Sherwood, bishop of Meath, by whose instigation it appears, at the time when Desmond was deputy, nine of this lord's men had been slain in A. D. Fingall. In a parliament held at Drogheda by the earl of Worcester, it was en- 1467. acted that Thomas, earl of Desmond, as well for alliances, fostering, and alterage

* Chief Rememb. Roll, Dub. 13, 14. Eliz.,—referred to by Lynch, *ibid.*

† This foundation was confirmed by his son James, anno 1472, and by Maurice, his brother, in 1496. In the charter of foundation the patron is styled earl of Desmond, lord of Decies, lord of Imokilly, lord of the regalities and liberties of the county of Kerry, and patron of this institution.—Smith *Hist. of Cork*, book i. chap. iii.

‡ Pat. Roll, 5 Ed. IV.—"This university not being endowed with sufficient revenues, the scheme did not take effect."—Mason, *Hist. of St. Patrick's Cathedral.*

§ For frightful proofs of the truth of this charge against him, see Stow, p. 423.

‖ For Worcester's severity, in the instance of Desmond, another motive has been suggested:—"Lord Tiptoft was interested in the lordships of Inchiquin, Youghall, and other extensive estates which lay within, or were now considered as part of, the seignories, of the Desmond family; and which, while their power and influence prevailed with the natives, his lordship, like his ancestors, could derive no benefit from."—Lynch (*Legislative Institutions.*) who refers to chief Rememb. Roll, Dub. 7 Ric. II. & 43 Ed. III.

¶ "He despised the king's marriage with so mean a subject as the lady Elizabeth Grey, and often said she was a tailor's widow."—*Cox.*

with the king's enemies, as for furnishing them with horses, harness, and arms, and also supporting them against the king's subjects, be attainted of treason; and that whoever hath any of his goods or lands, and doth not discover them to the deputy within fourteen days, shall be attainted of felony. Unprepared, as it would seem, for so rigorous a measure, Desmond was arrested by order of the lord deputy, and, on the 5th day of February, was beheaded at Drogheda.

A. D. 1468. At the same time with this ill-fated lord, the earl of Kildare and Edward Plunket had also been attainted. But as soon as Worcester, having thus accomplished what is supposed to have been the main object of his mission, returned into England, the earl of Kildare was not only pardoned and restored in blood by parliament, but also appointed to the government of Ireland as deputy of the duke of Clarence. It was during this lord's administration that, in consequence of a doubt having arisen whether the act of 6 Richard II., "de Raptoribus," was of force in Ireland, it was declared, in a parliament held at Drogheda, that not only the statute in question, but all other English statutes made before that time, were binding in Ireland.*

A. D. 1472. With a view to a better defence of the English territory, it was enacted, in a subsequent parliament, held at Naas, that "every merchant should bring twenty shillings' worth of bows and arrows into Ireland, for every twenty pounds' worth of other goods he imported from England."† It having been found, however, that in the present reduced state of the English colony, some measures of a more than ordinary cast were called for, in order to recruit and support the spirit of their small community, a fraternity of arms, under the title of the brothers of St. George, was at this time constituted, consisting of thirteen persons, of the highest rank and most approved loyalty, selected from the four cantons of Dublin, Meath, Kildare, and Louth. To the captain of this military brotherhood, who was to be elected annually, on St. George's day, was assigned a guard of 120 archers on horseback, 40 other horsemen, and 40 pages; and of these 200 men, consisted the whole of the standing forces then maintained by the English government in Ireland.‡

Had the natives but known their own strength, or rather, had they been capable of that spirit of union and concert by which alone the strength of a people is rendered effective, the whole military force of the Pale could not have stood before them a single hour. But divided, as the native Irish were, into septs, each calling itself a "nation," and all more suspicious and jealous of each other than of the common foe, it was hardly possible that, among a people so circumstanced, a public spirit could arise, or that any prospect, however promising, of victory over their masters, could make them relinquish for it the old hereditary habit of discord among themselves. That their English

A. D. 1475. rulers, though now so much weakened, did not the less confidently presume on their victim's patience under injustice, may be inferred from a law passed at this time, in a parliament held by William Sherwood, bishop of Meath, enacting that, "any Englishman, injured by a native not amenable to law, might reprise himself on the whole sept and nation."

The adherence of the Ormond family to the fortunes of Henry VI. had drawn down upon John, the sixth earl, the penalty of attainder, and consigned, during the early part

A. D. 1476. of this reign, all the other members of that noble house to obscurity and disgrace. By a statute, however, made in the sixteenth year of Edward IV., the act of attainder against John, earl of Ormond, was repealed, and that lord restored to his "lands, name, and dignity, as by title of his ancestors." So successful was he, too, in recommending himself to Edward, by his knowledge of languages and other courtly accomplishments, that the king pronounced him to be the "goodliest knight he had ever beheld, and the finest gentleman in Europe;" adding that, "if good breeding, nurture, and liberal qualities were lost in the world, they might all be found in John, earl of Ormond."§

Encouraged by the favour thus shown to the head of their house, the faction of the Butlers again appeared with refreshed force, while, for a time, the Geraldines sunk into

A. D. 1478. disfavour. It was not long, however, before the influence of the house of Kildare regained all its former ascendancy. In 1478, the same year in which the earl Thomas died, his son Gerald, who succeeded him, was appointed lord deputy of Ireland, and held that office, at different intervals, through the following three reigns. In one of the parliaments held by him at this period, it was enacted, that "the Pale

* See sir John Maynard's "Answer to a Book," &c.—*Hibernic.* p. 96.

† Cox.

‡ Davies,—who adds, "And as they were natives of the kingdom, so the kingdom itself did pay their wages, without expecting any treasure from England."

§ Carte's Ormond, *Introduct.* This earl, who was unmarried, and left no issue, undertook, from pious motives, a journey to Jerusalem, and died in the Holy Land.

should hold no correspondence with the Irish;" while, at the same time his own family was affording examples of the fated and natural tendency of the two races to come together, in the marriage of his sister to the head of the great northern sept of the O'Neill's.* It was, indeed, in the same parliament that forbade so peremptorily all communication with the Irish, that the special act was passed for the naturalization of Con O'Neill, on the occasion of his marriage with one of the lord deputy's sisters.† A. D. 1480.

On the death of the ill-fated duke of Clarence, the office of lieutenant of Ireland was conferred by Edward upon his second son, Richard, duke of York; and it was as deputy of this infant prince that the earl of Kildare now held the reigns of the government. To so low an ebb, however, was the Irish revenue at this time reduced, that a force of 80 archers on horseback, and 40 of another description of horsemen, called "spears," constituted the whole of the military establishment that could be afforded for that realm's defence: and lest the sum even of 600*l.*, annually, required for the maintenance of this small troop, might prove too onerous to the country, it was provided that, should Ireland be unable to pay it, the sum was to be sent thither from England.‡ A. D. 1478 to 1483.

CHAPTER XLIII.

EDWARD V. AND RICHARD III.

The Geraldines still in authority.—Parliaments held at Dublin.—Enactment of one of these Parliaments.—Reign of Richard III. terminated by the battle of Bosworth.

During the normal reign of the fifth Edward, and the short usurpation of Richard III., the condition of Ireland remained unimproved and unchanged. Throughout this brief and bloody period, the power of the Pale was almost entirely in the hands of the Geraldines,—the earl of Kildare performing the functions of lord deputy, while his brother, Sir Thomas of Laccagh, was lord chancellor of the kingdom. In a parliament held at Dublin, by the earl of Kildare, an act was passed which, for its unusually peaceful purport, may deserve to be remembered. It was enacted, "that the mayor and bailiffs of Waterford might go in pilgrimage to St. James of Compostella in Spain, leaving sufficient deputies to govern that city in their absence." By another act of this parliament, the corporation and men of the town of Ross were authorized to "reprize themselves against robbers."§ Such are the only incidents worthy of any notice that occur in our scanty records of this reign, which was brought to a close, by the battle of Bosworth, on the 22d of August, 1485. A. D. 1483. A. D. 1485.

* The sept, or nation, of the O'Neills of Ulster, was one of the five bloods, or lineages, of the Irish, who were by special grace enfranchised, and enabled to share in the benefits of English law.—See the case cited by Davies, where the plaintiff pleads, "quod ipse est de quinque sanguinibus." The four other "bloods" thus privileged, were the O'Melaghlins of Meath, the O'Connors of Connaught, the O'Brians of Thomond, and the Mac Moroughs of Leinster. From the above instance, however, of Kildare's son-in-law, it would appear that this general grant of naturalization was not always deemed sufficient.

† The eldest daughter of the late earl, Elenor, was married to Henry Mac Owen O'Neill, chief of his name, by whom she was mother of Con (More) O'Neill, who married her niece, daughter to Gerald, eighth earl of Kildare.—*Lodge.*

‡ Cox.

§ "In other words," says sir William Betham, "might rob the innocent to indemnify themselves for having been previously plundered."—See *Origin and History of the Early Parliaments of Ireland*—the latest and not least valuable of this indefatigable antiquarian's labours.

CHAPTER XLIV.

HENRY VII.

Policy of Henry respecting his claims to the crown.—Strength of the York party in Ireland.—Kildare suspected by the king.—Henry's cruelty towards the young earl of Warwick.—This conduct the source of all the subsequent plots.—Arrival of Simnel in Dublin.—General adoption of his cause in Ireland—is proclaimed king.—Movement in his favour by the English lords, Lincoln and Lovell—their arrival in Dublin with a body of German auxiliaries.—Henry endeavours to remove the delusion—is successful in England, but fails in Ireland.—Invasion of England by the forces of the Pale—are entirely defeated by the king's army at Stoke.—Simnel made prisoner, and transferred to the royal kitchen.—The king rewards the loyalty of Waterford—consents to pardon Kildare and the citizens of Dublin.—Opportunity lost of curbing the power of the Anglo-Irish lords.—Proceedings of Edgecomb's commission.—Henry summons the great lords of the Pale to Greenwich.—Murder of the ninth earl of Desmond.—Wars of his successor with the Irish.—Appearance of another impostor, Perkin Warbeck—pretends to be Richard, duke of York.—The Duchess of Burgundy the contriver of this plot.—The king of France invites Warbeck to his court—from thence he proceeds to Flanders—is received by the Duchess as her nephew.—The earl of Kildare in disgrace.—Sir Edward Poynings made lord deputy.—Expedition of Poynings into Ulster.—Kildare suspected of conspiring with the Irish enemy.—Poynings summons a Parliament—memorable statute which bears his name.—Other enactments of this Parliament.—Warbeck repairs to the court of Scotland—is received with royal honours—marries the daughter of the earl of Huntley.—Visit of O'Donnell to the Scottish court.—The earl of Kildare arrested, and sent prisoner to England—succeeds in refuting the charges against him—is made lord lieutenant.—Warbeck again tries his fortune in Ireland—is joined by the earl of Desmond.—Their unsuccessful expedition against Waterford.—Warbeck flies to Cornwall—is executed for treason at Tyburn.—Warfare among the Irish.—Military success of Kildare.—Confederacy among the great chiefs.—Battle of Knoctuadh.—Signal defeat of the Irish.

One of the most serious of the many evils attending that fierce hereditary feud, so long maintained between the two families from which England was, in those times, furnished with rulers, was, that it rendered each successive monarch little more than the crowned chief of a particular faction,—ruling as the champion rather of a portion of his people, than as the acknowledged and paternal sovereign of all. On the accession, however, of Henry VII., the prospects of the country were, in this respect, much improved; that prince having been furnished by a train of circumstances, with so many and such plausible titles to the crown, as enabled him to trust to their collective weight without risking the enforcement of them in detail, or arousing unnecessarily the spirit of party, by putting forth claims whose strength and safety lay in their silence.

Thus, his marriage with a princess of the house of York, if assumed as the foundation of his right to the crown, would have been viewed with jealousy by his own Lancastrian followers; while, on the other hand, the pretensions founded by him upon his descent from John of Gaunt would have offended the proud, and now mortified, Yorkists; and the only remaining ground left, that of the right of conquest, could not but awaken, he knew, the unwelcome recollection, that it was over Englishmen the boasted conquest had been obtained.* With a forbearance, therefore, in which coolness of temper had at least as much share as good sense, he refrained from advancing, more than was absolutely necessary, any distinct claim to the succession; and leaving his rights, such as they were, to their own silent influence, was content, in the entail of the crown, with the vague de-

* This ground of his claim was just intimated by him, in his first speech to the commons, but, almost in the same breath, skilfully softened away.—See Lingard, chap. 26.

claration that "the inheritance of the crown should rest, remain, and abide in the king."

This moderate policy may, with the less hesitation, be ascribed to cautious and calculating motives, inasmuch as the enmity of the king to the Yorkists continued to be as strong and revengeful as ever. That he was capable, however, of sacrificing this feeling to views of prudence and expediency, appears sufficiently from his conduct towards Ireland. For though on his accession, he found, in that kingdom, all the great offices filled by partisans of the house of York, he yet not only confirmed all these Yorkists in their several stations, but, by a stretch of confidence and delicacy of which he afterwards felt the imprudence, forbore from adding any of the Lancastrian party to the council, lest he might be supposed to distrust the loyalty of the Irish government, or regard any of its members with insulting suspicion or fear.*

While Henry, thus shaping his course to the state of affairs in Ireland, took pains to conciliate the favour of the party then most powerful, neither was he forgetful of the few who had always been staunch to his family's cause; and among these stood pre-eminent the noble family of Ormond. Thomas Butler, the seventh earl, declared a traitor in the first year of Edward IV., was now, by an act of the Irish parliament, restored to "honour and estate," and became distinguished for public services, both military and diplomatic.† A. D. 1485.

But the growing strength of the York faction in Ireland began now seriously to arrest the monarch's attention. The popular government of the duke of York was still fondly remembered in that country, and the cause of the family to which their favourite prince belonged had been espoused with the utmost ardour by the great bulk of the English settlers. The implied sanction, therefore, lately given to the ascendency of their party by the king, was hailed at the time with a warmth of joy and gratitude, which but fostered, as it proved, the seeds of future presumption and excess.

Having already had reason to suspect that Kildare was planning some mischief, the king wrote to him, to command his presence immediately in England, assigning as a pretext for this urgency, that he wished to advise with him concerning the peace of his Irish realm. But the earl, suspecting, doubtless, the real intent of this order, submitted the case to the parliament then assembled in Dublin, and procured letters to the king from the spiritual and temporal peers, representing that affairs requiring the lord deputy's presence were about to be discussed in parliament, and praying that, for a short time, he might be excused from obeying the royal command. Among the names of the clergy who subscribed these letters, is found that of Octavian de Palatio, archbishop of Armagh; a prelate whose subsequent conduct removes the suspicion of his having been actuated in this step by party feelings. The secular subscribers to the letters were Robert Preston, viscount Gormanstown, and the six most ancient of our barons, Slane, Delvin, Killeen, Howth, Trimleston, and Dunsany.‡ A. D. 1486.

It might not unreasonably have been expected by Henry, that the favourable circumstances under which he had commenced his reign, and more especially the reconcilement of the two rival houses, which seemed to have been accomplished by his marriage, would assure to him an easy and uncontested career. But the events and prospects now gradually unfolding themselves must have disabused him of any such flattering hope; and the chief source of much of the odium now gathering round him, as well as of those plots by which his throne was afterwards threatened, may be found in the impression produced, at the outset of his reign, by the odious harshness of his conduct towards the young Edward Plantagenet, son of the late duke of Clarence.

This prince, whom Edward IV. had created earl of Warwick,—the title borne by his grandfather,—had been treated at first, by Richard III., as heir apparent to the crown; but afterwards, fearing to find in him a rival, he kept the young prince a close prisoner in the castle of Sheriff-Hutton, in Yorkshire. This youth, at the time of Henry's accession, had just reached his fifteenth year; and so selfishly blind was the new monarch to every other consideration but that of seizing the prize which victory had allotted to him, that, although the contingency of this youth's right to the crown was still so remote as not to be calculated on, while any of the posterity of Edward IV. remained alive, he had

* Ware's *Annals*.

† *History of the Life of Ormond*.—"The attainder of I Edward IV. being reversed, Thomas, earl of Ormonde took possession of all the estate which his eldest brother had enjoyed in England; and was made by Henry VII. one of the privy council of England. He was one of the richest subjects in the king's dominions, having, after his brother James's death, found in his house, at the Black Friars in London, about 40,000*l.* sterling in money, besides plate, all which he carried over with him into Ireland.—*Carte, Introduct.*

‡ Ware's *Annals*.

him removed from his prison in Yorkshire to the Tower, there to pine in hopeless captivity, and with the fate of his murdered cousins for ever before his eyes.

While thus the story of this young prince was so much calculated to awaken pity for himself, and indignation against his oppressor, the great importance attached by Henry to his safe custody could not but render him an object of interest and speculation to the disaffected. What the king regarded with fear, the rebel would as naturally look to with hope; nor is it to be wondered at, that to persons in search of some tolerable frame-work for a conspiracy, a device connected with this youth's fate should, for want of a better, have suggested itself.

The birth of a son, at this time, to the king, by diminishing the chance of a change in the succession, but furnished the conspirators with a new motive for activity; and, in order to profit by the strong feeling in favour of the Yorkists, that prevailed in Ireland, Dublin was the place selected for the opening of this strange plot.* Early in the year 1486, there landed in that city a priest of Oxford, named Richard Simons, attended by his ward, Lambert Simnel, a boy of about eleven years of age,† the son of an Oxford tradesman. This youth he presented to the lord deputy, and the other lords of the council, as Edward earl of Warwick, son to George duke of Clarence.

To attempt to personate a living prince, so near at hand as to be easily confronted with the impostor, was a contrivance, it must be owned, as daring and difficult as it was clumsy. Nothing appears, however, to have been wanting, that careful rehearsal and consummate acting could accomplish, to render the scheme consistent and plausible. The youth himself, who, we are told, was handsome and of noble demeanour,‡ well became the lofty station which he assumed; and, having been tutored well in his story, gave such an account of his past adventures, as coincided with all that his hearers had known or learned on the subject themselves. The scheme was instantly and completely successful. The earl of Kildare, far less from credulity, it is clear, than from the bias of party spirit, gave in at once, and without any reserve, to the fraud; and his example was immediately followed by almost the whole of the people of the Pale, who, admitting at once, without farther inquiry, the young pretender's title, proclaimed him by the style of Edward VI., king of England and France, and lord of Ireland.

Amidst this general defection, the citizens of Waterford remained still firm in their allegiance to Henry; the family of the Butlers, pledged hereditarily to the house of York, continued likewise faithful; while almost the only ecclesiastics who refused to bow before the impostor, were the foreign archbishop of Armagh, Octavian de Palatio,§ and the bishops of Cashel, Tuam, Clogher, and Ossory.

Though, ostensibly, Simons the priest was the only person engaged in the scheme of palming Simnel on the Irish as Warwick, it seems generally to be supposed that this plot, as well as all others during this reign, had originated at the court of the duchess of Burgundy, third sister of Edward IV.,—"the chief end of whose life," we are told, "was to see the majesty royal of England once more replaced in her house."‖ No sooner was it known in England that the Irish had declared in favour of the pretended Warwick, than the nephew of this princess, the earl of Lincoln,¶ who was then in attendance on Henry, and had received marks of his confidence, took suddenly his departure, and repaired to the court of his aunt, whither lord Lovell also had lately betaken himself, after a short and feeble attempt at insurrection. The object of this suspicious movement did not long remain a mystery. It appeared that Lincoln had gone to consult with the duchess of Burgundy and lord Lovell as to the most prompt and efficient mode of assisting the cause of the young pretender;** and the fruit of their counsels was seen in the landing of a force of 2000 German troops at Dublin, under the command of a veteran officer, Martin Swartz, and accompanied by the two English earls, Lincoln and Lovell.††

Mean while, with the hope of correcting the dangerous impression already produced by the impostor, the king gave orders that the real earl of Warwick should be conducted, in

* Remarking that the king had been "a little improvident in the matter of Ireland," lord Bacon adds, "since he knew the strong bent of that country towards the house of York, and that it was a tickliah and unsettled state, more easy to receive distempers and mutations than England was."

† Lingard.—According to some authorities, fifteen years of age.

‡ "He was," says Bacon, "a comely youth and well favoured, not without some extraordinary dignity and grace of aspect."

§ In a letter written by this prelate to Pope Innocent VIII., he thus describes the effects of the fraud: "The clergy and secular are all distracted at this present with a king and no king,—some saying he is the son of Edward earl of Warwick, others saying he is an impostor. But our brother of Canterbury hath satisfied me of the truth."

‖ Bacon.

¶ This nobleman, who was the nephew of Richard III., had been declared, by that monarch, heir apparent to the crown.

** Hall's *Chronicle*.

†† Bacon. Ware. Hall.

the sight of all London, from the Tower to St. Paul's. He also took this prince along with him to the palace of Shene, where noblemen, attached to the York family, and well acquainted with his person, daily visited and conversed with him. This open trial of the question satisfied the people of England; but the Irish, remote from such means of inquiry, and embarked too heartily in the general cause to be at all particular as to its grounds, not only persisted in their adherence to Simnel, but retorted on Henry the charge of imposture, maintaining *his* Warwick to be the counterfeit, and their "lad," as they familiarly styled him, the real Plantagenet.

In this state of infatuation, the joint effects of weak credulity and faction, were almost the whole of the people of the Pale, at the time when Swartz and his Germans landed at Dublin. It may be conceived, therefore, to what a height their spirits were elevated by this re-enforcement, as well as by the sanction derived to their enterprise from the high rank of the two English lords who accompanied it. The earl of Lincoln, though fully aware of the imposture, having often conversed with the real Warwick at Shene, recommended that Simnel should be crowned; and accordingly this ceremony was performed by John Payne, bishop of Meath, in the cathedral called Christ Church. The boy was crowned with a diadem borrowed, for the occasion, from a statue of the Virgin, in St. Mary's Abbey; and was carried in triumph from the church to the castle of Dublin, on the shoulders of a gigantic man, called Great Darcy of Platten.*

Emboldened by this success, the Anglo-Irish leaders extended still farther their views; and, presuming the mass of the English people to be quite as ripe for revolt as themselves, resolved on the bold and hazardous step of an immediate invasion of England. No time was lost in putting this fool-hardy project in execution; the earl of Lincoln was intrusted with the command of the armament; and so great was the zeal with which all classes and conditions joined in the enterprise, that the lord Thomas Fitz Gerald, the brother of the earl of Kildare, resigned the high office of lord chancellor in order to accompany the expedition.

About the beginning of the month of June, the force destined for this object, consisting of the 2000 German auxiliaries, and "a great multitude," says the chronicler, of Irish, set sail from Dublin, and with a fair wind reached in safety the Pile of Foudray, in the southern extremity of Furness. There landing, they encamped at Swartmoor, where being joined by sir Thomas Broughton, the friend of lord Lovell, they directed their march through the county of York. The hope held out to them of a rising in their favour, by the Yorkists of the northern counties, proved to be utterly groundless; though of all that could be done for them by the slowness and ignorance of the enemy, they appear to have had the full advantage; for, such was the confusion and mismanagement of the king's army, that, between Nottingham and Newark, it actually lost its way, and was forced to wait for guides.† Had such a mishap befallen the Irish and German invaders, it would not have been remarkable.

Growing impatient, at length, of a delay which brought no sign or promise of additional strength, Lincoln boldly pushed forward his force, and coming in conflict, at Stoke, with the vanguard of Henry's army, under the earl of Oxford, commenced the short but sanguinary action which finally decided the fate of the mock monarch of Ireland. So great was the advantage of strength of the royalists' side, that but a third part of the king's force was engaged in the action; while of the 8000 men that formed the invading army, one half was left dead on the field. The Germans fought with the cool courage of veterans; while the soldiers of the Pale, though armed but with Irish darts and skeins, and therefore unable to stand the shock of heavy cavalry, displayed bravery worthy of a more rational cause.‡ Among the slain were almost all the chief leaders of the expedition, the earl of Lincoln, lord Thomas and Maurice Fitz Gerald, sir Thomas Broughton, and Martin Swartz. Lord Lovell, as appears from the journal of the herald who witnessed the conflict,§ was seen to escape from the field of battle, but no farther tidings were ever heard of him.

The fate of Simnel, who, together with his tutor, fell into the hands of the victorious

* Cox. † Lingard.

‡ "Of the other syde, the Iryshemen, although they foughte hardely and stucke to it valyauntly, yet because they were, after the manners of theyr countrey, almoste naked, without harneys or armure, they were stryken downe and slayne lyke dull and brute beastes, whose deathes and destruccyons was a great discouragynge and abashement to the residue of the company."—*Hall.*

§ Leland, *Coll.* iv. 214., cited by Lingard. "Not forgetting the grete malice that the lady Margaréte of Bourgoigne bereth contynuelly against us, as she shewed lately in sending hider a fayned boye, surmising him to have been the son of the duc of Clarence, and caused him to bee accompanyed with Th' earl of Lincoln, the lord Lovel, and with a grete multitude of Irishemen and of Almains, whoes end, blessed bee God, was as ye knowe wele."—Henry VII. to Sir Gilbert Talbot, Ellis's *Original Letters.*

party, formed such a contrast to his short pageant of royalty, as chequers the story of this sanguinary struggle with about an equal mixture of the painful and the ludicrous. Seeing no farther harm to be apprehended from this weak tool of faction, before whom the lords and prelates of Ireland had so lately bowed in homage, the king, after granting him full pardon, made him a turnspit in the royal kitchen, and, not long after, raised him to the rank of a falconer.

Though faction and vulgar ambition were doubtless the source of most of the mischief by which, in this farcical conspiracy, the lords of the Pale had disgraced themselves, it can as little be questioned, that a great portion of the community, having been taught, by the example and language of their superiors, to regard Simnel as their rightful prince, might have adopted with perfect sincerity such a persuasion, and felt, accordingly, an earnest zeal in his service. That this feeling continued to be cherished by his followers in Dublin, for some months after his defeat and fall, may be collected from a letter addressed to the citizens of Waterford by Henry,* "concerning the treasons of the city of Dublin," wherein he complains that, "contrary to the duty of their allegiance, they will not yet know their seditious opinions, but unto this day uphold and maintain the same presumptuously." As a means of punishing this contumacy, he commands the citizens of Waterford to seize on the ships, goods, and merchandise of the rebels of Dublin, and "to employ the same unto the behoof and common weal of our said city of Waterford."

Severe mention is likewise made in this royal letter of "our rebel," as the king styles him, the earl of Kildare. But this lord, though conscious of the daring enormity of his offence, was also too sensible of the extent and strength of his own power, to despair of regaining his former hold on the royal favour. In conjunction, therefore, with other great lords of the Pale, he despatched emissaries to Henry, acknowledging, in the most contrite manner, their common transgressions, and humbly imploring his pardon.

Perceiving that the storm which had threatened so seriously from that quarter had now blown over, and knowing it was only by the power and influence of Kildare and a few other great lords that the Irish chieftains could be kept in awe, Henry preferred the dangerous experiment of pardoning that powerful nobleman, to the still more serious danger, as he deemed it, of driving him into new and confirmed hostility. With a policy, therefore, which only the anomalous position of Ireland could account for, he retained him still in the office of chief governor;—still confided to his hands the trust which he had just so openly and treasonably betrayed.†

The clemency thus shown to offenders in the higher ranks, encouraged the lower class of rebels to try also their chance of pardon; and the citizens of Dublin, who had viewed with jealousy the favours bestowed by the king upon Waterford,—as if they themselves could rationally expect to enjoy at once the privileges of rebellion and the rewards of loyalty,—now endeavoured to recover their lost ground; and, addressing a petition, with the view of exculpating themselves, to the throne, charged the whole blame of the late revolt upon the lord deputy and the clergy. "We were daunted," say they, "to see, not only your chief governor, whom your highness made ruler over us, to bend or bow to that idol whom they have made us to obey, but also our father of Dublin, and most of the clergy of the nation, excepting the reverend father his grace Octavian, archbishop of Armagh. We, therefore, humbly crave your highness's clemency towards your poor subjects of Dublin, the metropolis of your highness's realm of Ireland." This crouching effort, on the part of the citizens, to remove from themselves the odium and ridicule of the late proceedings, does not appear to have been in any way noticed or acknowledged by the king.

No juncture, perhaps had occurred, from the time of the conquest of Ireland by the English, of which a firm and foresighted policy might so advantageously have availed itself, for the great object of completing by the law, a work which the sword had left so mangled and imperfect, as that now afforded to the English monarch by the humbled condition to which the great lords of the Pale were reduced. So much had the attention of most of his predecessors been drawn away by foreign wars and domestic feuds from a due watchfulness over the course of Irish affairs, that the concerns of that kingdom were, in general, abandoned, without any really efficient check, to the selfish and factious administration of one or other of those great Anglo-Irish families, who, according to the ascendency of their several parties, were each in turn, the real rulers of the realm.

Nor was it only from their position as subaltern masters, that the Anglo-Irish lords derived their powers of mischief; they had likewise inherited, from their mixed descent, a combination of qualities and habits such as was in itself sufficient to account for much of

* Ryland, *Hist. of Waterford.*

† Ware's Annals.

the evils of which they were the authors. For, while, on the one hand, their prejudice in favour of the land of their birth led them to adopt all its rudest laws and usages, and even to oppose themselves to change or improvement, as an insult, their English blood, on the other hand, showed itself in their retention of the tone and policy of conquerors; in their reliance, for the safety of their power, rather on the arms of the nation they had sprung from, than on the social and loyal affections of those among whom they were born, and in their reserving to themselves, as a trophy of English supremacy, a monopoly of all the advantages and protection of English law.

In their late factious revolt in favour of Simnel, the leading lords of the Pale had hazarded a more than ordinary defiance of the royal authority; the very government itself having set the new and monstrous example of official high treason and vice-regal revolt. But their discomfiture and humiliation had been complete; nor could the crown have found a more favourable occasion to wrest the rule of that realm from the hands of its selfish oligarchy, to remove the barrier so long interposed between the native race and the throne, and thus, by extending to all, as a right, that legal protection which was now but the privilege of a few, to make the law, rather than the sword, the means of converting the Irish enemies into subjects.

Such appears not, however, to have been the view taken by Henry of this important crisis; which is the more unaccountable, as it was the very policy pursued so boldly and successfully by him in England. There, also, had he found, on his accession, an aristocracy of petty kings, alike domineering over the people and dictating to the throne. But, by breaking down this unruly power, he had given to the crown its due stability and weight, and at the same time removed the pressure of so many small tyrannies from the people. Very different was the line now adopted by him, as deliberately, doubtless, but less wisely, with regard to Ireland. Instead of availing himself of the present reduced state of the Anglo-Irish satraps, to curtail, at least, if not crush, their powers of mischief, and thus clear the ground for future reforms, he still retained, as we have seen, in full, undiminished authority, all the chief authors of the late daring revolt; and the only remedial step taken by him was the appointment of sir Richard Edgecomb, a gentleman high in his confidence and the controller of his household, to proceed to Ireland, with a guard of 500 men, there to receive new oaths of allegiance from the nobility, gentry, and commonalty, and, after binding them by law to the observance of their oaths, to grant them the royal pardon. A. D. 1488.

The progress and acts of this special commission have been recorded with much minuteness.* At Kinsale, sir Richard, determining not to land, received the homage of Thomas, lord Barry, on board his ship; but, on the following day, at the earnest entreaty of James, lord Courcy, he made his entry into the town, where, in the chancel of St. Melteoc's† church, Courcy did homage for his barony, and all the inhabitants of the town, following his example, took the oath of fidelity, and entered into recognizances.

From thence sir Richard sailed for Waterford, where he was honourably entertained by the inhabitants, and returned them thanks, in the king's name, for their city's constancy and faithfulness. Understanding that he was the bearer of the royal pardon for the earl of Kildare, a nobleman who had been always, they said, their "utter enemy," on account of their loyalty to the English crown, they prayed of sir Richard to sue, in their behalf, to the king, that if ever Kildare should again be lord of that land, their city might be exempt from his jurisdiction, as well as from that "of all other Irish lords that should bear any rule in that land for evermore, and should hold immediately of the king and his heirs, and of such lords of England, as shall fortune hereafter to have the rule of Ireland,—and of none others."

Very different was the scene prepared for him in Dublin, where, arriving on the 5th of July, he found the mayor and citizens waiting, in the guise of suppliants, to receive him, at the abbey gate of the Friars Preachers, by whom, during his stay, he was to be lodged and entertained. Kildare himself, who then happened to be absent on a pilgrimage, returned to Dublin at the end of about seven days, when by his desire, an interview took place between him and sir Richard, at the abbey of St. Thomas,‡ in the west suburbs of the city; the king's commissioner being conducted thither by the bishop of Meath, one of the most active of the supporters of Simnel, by the baron of Slane, and several other high personages. Sir Richard then openly, in the great chamber, delivered the king's letters to the earl,—"not without some show," it is added, "of bitter-

* Voyage of Sir Richard Edgecomb into Ireland;—for which see Harris's *Hibernica*.

† "This is, I dare say, the St. Multos, whose name the parish church of Kinsale bears."—Lanigan, *Ecclesiast. Hist. of Ireland.*

‡ Founded in that part of Dublin now called Thomas Court.

ness,"—and a parley was held between them on the subject of the commission, which ended unsatisfactorily,—Kildare returning to his seat at Maynooth, and sir Richard to the Friars Preachers.

At length, after various consultations, both in Dublin and at Maynooth, the earl did homage, in the presence of the royal commissioner, in the great chamber of the abbey of St. Thomas; and, being afterwards absolved of his excommunication, while mass was sung, took the oath of allegiance,* and bound himself in recognizances to the due observance of it. Sir Richard then hung round Kildare's neck a golden chain which the king had sent him, as an earnest of his favour; after which, the earl and the commissioner, attended by all the bishops and lords, went into the church of the monastery, "and in the choir thereof, the archbishop of Dublin began Te Deum, and the choir, with the organs, sung it up solemnly; and at that time all the bells in the church rung." When these ceremonies were all ended, sir Richard entertained the earl and the other lords at a great feast in the abbey of the Friars Preachers.†

To this general and, in some respects, indiscreet extension of clemency, there were but two exceptions; namely, James Keating, the turbulent prior of Kilmainham,‡ and Thomas Plunket, chief justice of the common pleas, who, of all the authors and fomenters of the late revolt, had been the most active and mischievous. Through the intercession of Kildare and others of the nobility, Plunket was pardoned; but the life of Keating having been, for the thirty years he was prior of Kilmainham, one constant course of outrage, rapine, and fraud, he was excluded from the benefits of pardon, and also dispossessed of the office of constable of the castle of Dublin, which he had for several years violently usurped.

Having thus finished his task with the only act of vigour and justice by which this very unmeaning mission appears to have been signalized, Edgecomb, escorted by the archbishop of Dublin, the chief justice, Bermingham, and the recorder of Dublin, proceeded, on the 30th of July, to Dalkey; and, after more than a week of vain efforts to leave the Irish coast, the wind being strong and adverse, succeeded, at length, in getting to sea, and reached the port of Fowey.§

Though Henry, acting on the dictates of a judgment seldom clouded either by feeling or temper, had deemed it prudent, notwithstanding their late flagrant treason, to leave still in the hands of Kildare and his fellow delinquents, all the highest offices of the state, he yet failed not to keep a strict watch on their movements; and seeing reason, doubtless, to apprehend from them some new scheme in favour of the house of York, he summoned the greater number of the lords temporal of that kingdom to repair to him in England. In consequence of this, the earl of Kildare, the viscounts Buttevant and Fermoy, and the lords of Athenry, Kinsale, Gormanstown, Delvin, Howth, Slane, Killeen, Trimleston, and Dunsany, waited upon the king at Greenwich.

A. D. 1489.

Whatever reprehension they might naturally have expected from the lips of their offended sovereign, such was by no means the tone adopted towards them by the calm and calculating Henry. Instead of bringing against these lords their past delinquencies,—an account closed, as he felt, by the royal pardon,—he wisely contented himself with warning them against any repetition of such conduct; and, with reference to their choice of a creature like Simnel to be their sovereign, told them, with bitter sarcasm, that "if their king were to continue absent from them, they would, at length, crown apes." Shortly after, he invited them to a splendid banquet, where a still more significant satire on their folly was presented to them in the person of Lambert Simnel himself, who had been exalted, for that day, from the region of the kitchen, to wait on his late noble subjects at table ‖

During the stay of these lords at Greenwich, they accompanied the king in a solemn procession to the church; and, when they took leave of him to return to Ireland, were dismissed with marks of the royal favour, among which was a gift to the baron of Howth of 300 pieces of gold.¶

While thus the leaders of the small colony of the Pale—from whence, almost solely, in these times, are furnished the materials of what is called Irish history—were indulging, as usual, in the two alternate extremes of treason and abject loyalty, the native septs, who

* The earl's oath was taken solemnly, on the holy Host, before the altar; and Edgecomb suspected, it is clear, some intended evasion of this rite, as he insisted that "a chaplain of his own should consecrate the Host."

† Ware's *Annals*.

‡ For a full account of this prior's rapacious and violent proceedings, see Archdall, *Monast. Hib.* p. 349.

§ Edgecomb's Voyage. *Hibernica*.

‖ Hall's *Chronicle*. Ware's *Annals*. ¶ Ware's *Annals*, ad ann. 1489.

still held possession of by far the greater and more fertile portion of the island, continued, unmindful of the presence of the foreigner, to make war only among themselves; and appeared to forget that they had any enemies in the country but each other. There were a few, indeed, among the great Anglo-Irish lords, who, by long mixture of blood, by their extensive possessions, and, even still more, by their flattering adoption of the laws and usages of the land, had gained a station in the hearts of the natives, little less home-felt and familiar than that of their own native chiefs. Of this description had been, through several generations, the earls of Desmond; the ninth earl of which family was, in the third year of this reign, murdered by one of his own servants in his house at Rathkeal, in the county of Limerick. Among the crimes charged against this lord's father, and for which he was executed, as we have seen, at Drogheda, alliance with the Irish was one of the most prominent; and yet—so feeble are all laws against which nature enters her protest—the very son of that lord, James, the late earl, was not deterred by his father's tragic fate from choosing for his wife a lady of the land, the daughter of O'Brian, chief of Thomond.

Soon after the departure of the king's commissioner, Kildare had been called to suppress an outbreak of the Mac Geoghegans, in a small territory belonging to the chief of that sept, called Moy-Cashel. There, having taken and destroyed the castle of Beleragh, the king's troops dispersed themselves over the whole district, and after destroying all the villages and farms, returned to their quarters loaded with spoil. There was also much fighting, in the course of this year, between the new earl of Desmond, the tenth of that title, and the Irish chiefs in his neighbourhood. This lord, who from a defect in his limbs, had been nicknamed the Lame, soon acquired, by his feats in the field, the title of the Warlike;* and, following the example of his noble progenitors, lived almost entirely on his own princely domains, among the native septs,—making wars and treaties with them at pleasure, and continuing in his ways and habits all the barbaric grandeur of the ancient Irish chief. In perfect consistency with this character, he appears to have passed his whole life in constant warfare with his neighbours; having qualified himself, if it may be so expressed, for this state of mutual hostility, by becoming one of themselves. In a victory gained by him over Morough O'Carrol, prince of Ely, that chief was slain in the course of the conflict, together with his brother Maol Mury; and, in another great battle fought by Desmond, Mac Carthy, the rightful prince of Desmond, was vanquished and slain.

About the same time, the great chieftain, O'Neill, having committed some acts of aggression upon a neighbouring lord, O'Donnell, animosities arose between their two septs, which continued to rage for some months; till at length they were interrupted by the murder of O'Neill by his own brother. The fierce struggle between these two chiefs is said to have commenced by a correspondence truly laconic:—"Send me tribute, or else ——," was the brief mandate of O'Neill; "I owe you no tribute, and if ——," was the significant answer of O'Donnell.†

The plot of which Simnel was made the instrument having proved so signal a failure, it would seem hardly conceivable that, in but a few years after, some of the very same personages who had been concerned in this abortive scheme should have brought forward another contrivance of nearly the same pattern; and moreover, that Ireland, or rather the seat of the English power in that island, should have been again chosen, on no very flattering estimate of its honesty or discernment, to be the opening scene of the imposture. Of this plot, as well as of the former, the ever restless duchess of Burgundy was the prime mover;‡ and the personage whom she now prepared to bring forward was no other than Richard, duke of York, the second son of Edward IV., who had made his escape, as she pretended, from the Tower, when his elder brother was murdered. A. D. 1490.

In her choice of the personage to be represented, she showed, on the present occasion, far more judgment than on the former, since to Richard, were he still living, the crown really belonged; whereas, the young Warwick could not have succeeded as long as any of the descendants of Edward IV. were alive. The individual she had chosen to personate her royal nephew, and who bore some resemblance to him, it is said, in his person and features, was an accomplished young Fleming, named Peter Osbeck, though

* Lodge. † Cox.

‡ "The lady Margaret of Burgundy," says Bacon, "whose palace was the sanctuary and receptacle of all traitors against the king."—According to Henry's account of the plot, there had been two other subjects of personation thought of, before Richard, duke of York, was adopted. "Another fayned lad," he says, "called Perkin Warbeck, born at Tournay in Picardy, at his first into Ireland, called himself the bastard son of king Richard; after that the son of the said duc of Clarence; and now the second son of our fadre king Edward iiijth, whom God assoile.—*Ellis's Original Letters.*

generally called Perkin Warbeck; and, from the time it must have taken to educate him for the new character he was about to assume, it is clear that the indefatigable duchess must have begun to lay the foundation of this second bold imposture almost immediately after the failure of the first.

Having succeeded, as she hoped, in making of this youth an instrument aptly suited to her views, she deemed it prudent to wait a more favourable time for the development of her plot; and with the view, mean while, of keeping Warbeck concealed, as well as of diverting attention from Flanders, as the birth-place of the plot, she sent him privately, under the care of lady Brampton, into Portugal. Whether any rumours had yet reached Henry of this new plot of the intriguing duchess, does not very clearly appear; but that he had grounds, at this time, for suspecting the earl of Kildare of some embryo mischief, may be taken for granted, from his sudden dismissal of that powerful lord from the office of deputy. He also, at the same time, removed from the post of high treasurer, which had been held by him for above thirty-eight years, Kildare's father-in-law, Fitz-Eustace, baron of Portlester. In place of Kildare, the archbishop of Dublin, Walter Fitz-Symons, was made lord deputy; while, with ominous warning for the Geraldines, sir James Ormond, natural son of the late earl,—who had died on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land,—was appointed high treasurer in the place of lord Portlester.

A. D. 1492.

It was now seen of what potent efficacy had been the mere name of Kildare in keeping the Irish, around the Pale, in a state of subjection and peace; for no sooner was his removal from the government known, than they rose in tumultuous revolt, and laid waste and burnt the English borders.

In this condition were the affairs of Ireland, and the English monarch had just embarked in a war with France, when the duchess of Burgundy, timing most skilfully her enterprise, sent orders to Perkin to sail without delay for Ireland; and such ready dupes, or instruments, did her scheme find in that country, that the mere announcement of the arrival at Cork of an ordinary merchant vessel from Lisbon, with a youth on board, richly attired, who called himself Richard duke of York, the second son of Edward IV., appears to have been sufficient to rouse into activity the ever ready elements of Anglo-Irish faction.

A merchant of Cork, named John Water, who had been lately mayor of that city, took up warmly the young pretender's cause, and enlisted the citizens in his favour. There were also letters despatched to Kildare, and his kinsman, Desmond, entreating them, as champions of the York cause, to extend to this youth their sanction and aid; but how far either of those lords embarked, at this time, in his wild enterprise, we have no means of ascertaining. The great success, however, of the plot in Cork had bestowed on it a stamp which secured its currency elsewhere; and the news of the event had no sooner reached France, than the king, perceiving what use might be made of such an instrument, in the present critical state of his relations with England, sent off messengers in haste to Cork, to invite Warbeck to his court, and assure him of welcome and protection.

The reception the pretender had experienced from Henry's factious subjects was outdone in pomp, though not in cordiality, by that which awaited him at the court of Henry's enemy;—where, treated with all the forms due to the lofty rank assumed by him, he was lodged in splendid apartments, and had a guard of honour appointed to attend him, of which the sieur de Concressault, a Scotsman by descent, was the commander. This stroke of policy was followed quickly by the intended effect. Fearing the influence of such an example on his own subjects, the English monarch consented readily to more equal terms of peace with France; and the tool, Warbeck, having served the purpose for which his mock honours were granted, found himself consigned to unceremonious neglect. Having some reason also to fear that he would be delivered up to Henry, he withdrew himself privately from the court of France, and fled into Flanders. There, with well-feigned wonder and triumph, the scheming duchess received him as her nephew, then for the first time seen by her; presented him, as such, to her assembled court; appointed a guard for his person of thirty halberdiers, "clad," as the chronicler tells us, "in a party-coloured livery of murrey and blue;"* and bestowed upon him the appellation of "the White Rose of England."

The triumph of the party that had succeeded to authority in Ireland, was still fully maintained. In a parliament held at Dublin, by the present deputy, archbishop Fitz-Symons, some inquisitions that had been found against him, through the instigation of lord Portlester, were declared to be null and void; while, at the same time, lord Portlester himself was called to account for his long mismanagement of the public revenues, and

* Hall. Bacon.

ordered, on pain of imprisonment and forfeiture, to pay all the arrears due by him to the exchequer.

Towards the end of this year, Fitz-Symons was succeeded in the government by sir Robert Preston, first viscount of Gormanston, who immediately summoned several of the nobles and chief gentlemen of the counties of Dublin, Kildare, and Meath, to assemble at Trim, and take into consideration the state of the kingdom. Among the "articles for the peace of the realm," subscribed by them, there is one deserving of notice, as showing that the right of making war, as well with each other as with the natives, was sometimes assumed, in defiance of law, by the lawgivers of the Pale themselves:—"No man," says the article, "must make war without the consent of the king's deputy."*

The late lord deputy, archbishop Fitz-Symons, having been sent for by Henry, in the autumn of this year, to give him information of the state of affairs in Ireland, Kildare, who had learned that his adversaries at court were busy in defaming his character, sailed also immediately for England, with the view of clearing himself to the king. But the party opposed to him were no less alert in their movements; and the lord deputy Gormanston leaving the government in the hands of his son, followed the earl to England, and there, with the assistance of sir James Ormond and the archbishop,† succeeded for the time so well, in thwarting the views of Kildare, that this lord's justification was rejected and himself sent back in disgrace to Dublin.

The effect produced by the landing of Warbeck in Ireland, not merely as regarded that country itself, but as viewed in its possible influence on other nations, had led Henry to consider more seriously the state of his Irish dominions; and the step now taken by him, however inadequate to the actual exigencies of the case, may be regarded as the first real effort of the English government in Ireland to curb that spirit of provincial despotism which it had itself let loose and fostered. Of all the means of oppression and mischief placed at the disposal of the Anglo-Irish aristocracy, their packed and irresponsible parliament was certainly not the least efficient. A few rich and mighty lords combined in themselves the whole weight of the body; and of these, the petty parliament of the four shires was always the obsequious instrument. According, therefore, as the Butlers or the Geraldines happened to be uppermost, so were the justice and favour of the crown dealt out; while, by both factions equally, the subjects of the Pale were harassed with forays and exactions, and the hapless natives themselves hunted, like wild beasts, into their coverts.

The person selected to carry into effect the important reforms the king now meditated, and also to trace out and punish the lurking abettors of Warbeck, was sir Edward Poynings, a knight of the garter and privy councillor, in whom the king placed much confidence. There went likewise with him, to form his council, several eminent English lawyers; and he was attended by a small force amounting to about a thousand men. Finding, on his arrival, that some of the most active abettors of Warbeck had escaped into Ulster, and were there protected by the native Irish, he deemed it most politic to begin by punishing these delinquents, so as to strike terror into the disaffected, before he addressed himself to those measures of reform which had been the chief object of his coming. Uniting with his own forces such as could be collected for him within the Pale, he directed his march towards Ulster, attended by sir James Ormond, and, notwithstanding all that had lately occurred, by the earl of Kildare. A. D. 1494.

Such influence, indeed, had this lord acquired over the minds of the natives, that, whether as a sanction or a terror, his name was indispensable to the full success of every dealing with them, whether of negotiation or of warfare; and this ascendancy over them he owed not more to his reputation for warlike deeds, than to the pride they took in him, as their born countryman, and also as connected, by family alliances, with some of the most popular of their own national chiefs. He appears himself, likewise, to have gone far beyond most of his brother lords in adopting the manners, usages, and tone of thinking of the native Irish; and how trying and equivocal was the position in which his relationship with both races sometimes placed him, is strikingly shown by all that arose out of his expedition, at this time, under Poynings, into Ulster. O'Hanlon and Mac Genis, the leaders of the Irish there collected, retired, as usual, on the approach of the enemy, into their bogs and forests; and all that was left, therefore, for Poynings to resort to, was the equally usual procedure of burning and laying waste the whole of the lands of the two chiefs.

* Cox.

† Of this prelate, who was in great favour with Henry, the following anecdote is told by Stanihurst:—"Being present when an oration was made in praise of the king, he was asked by his majesty, at the close of the speech, what he found most material in it. The archbishop replied, 'If it pleaseth your highness, it pleaseth me. I find no fault, save only that he flattered your majesty too much.'—'Now, in good faith,' said the king, 'our father of Dublin. we were minded to find the same fault ourselves.'"—*De Rebus. Hib.*

Strong suspicions arose that Kildare, from a feeling of revenge for his late treatment had formed a plot, in concert with O'Hanlon, for the assassination of the lord deputy; and, still farther to corroborate this suspicion, intelligence arrived, that James Fitz Gerald, the earl's brother, had suddenly seized on the castle of Catherlough, and strengthened it with a garrison. This ominous news compelled sir Edward to hasten his return. Making what terms he could with O'Hanlon and Mac Genis, and binding them both, by oaths and hostages, to observe the peace, he immediately marched his army to Catherlough, and, after a siege of ten days, obtained possession of the castle.

In the month of November this year, was held that memorable parliament at Drogheda, which enacted the statute called, after the name of the lord deputy, Poynings' Act. The provision made by this particular enactment was, that no parliament should, for the future, be holden in Ireland until the chief governor and council had first certified to the king, under the great seal of that land, "as well the causes and considerations as the acts they designed to pass, and till the same should be approved by the king and council." This noted statute was meant as a preventive of some of those evils and inconveniences which could not but arise from the existence of a separate legislature in Ireland, independent of, and irresponsible to, that of England, and therefore liable, in the hands of a factious aristocracy, to be made the instrument of mere selfish rapacity and revenge. The mischiefs inseparable from the nature of a body so constituted were shown, in their most flagrant form, during the contests between the Yorkists and Lancastrians; and very recently, as we have seen, the gross mockery had been exhibited of a parliament summoned to sanction the claims of the wretched impostor, Lambert Simnel.*

It was also enacted, in this present parliament, that all the statutes made lately in England, concerning or belonging to the public weal, should be thenceforth good and effectual in Ireland.

Among several other acts, passed at this time, of an inferior but still important character, there was one annulling a prescription claimed by rebels and traitors, in Ireland, by reason of an act, passed during the lieutenancy of the duke of York, ordaining that Ireland should be a sanctuary for foreigners, and that it should be treason to disturb any refugees in that country, by any writ, letters missive, or other such authority, from England. This dangerous exemption had been granted by Richard, duke of York,† when engaged in rebellion against Henry VI., for the purpose of encouraging his friends to repair to him in Ireland; and the abettors of Simnel and Warbeck had pleaded it in excuse of their late treason. It was, accordingly, now repealed, and all receivers and maintainers of traitors were declared guilty of treason.

One of the abuses, proved by these statutes to be then prevalent, was the practice, among the great lords, of keeping crowds of retainers; an abuse carried also, at this period, to a dangerous extent in England. The power assumed, too, by the lords of the Pale, of making war or peace, as they pleased, was likewise prohibited; and to stir up the "Irishry" against the people of the Pale, or make war upon the chief governor, was declared high treason. The renowned statutes of Kilkenny were revived and confirmed by this parliament, with the exception only of that which prohibited the use of the Irish language;—a law long rendered inoperative by the general prevalence of the native tongue throughout all the English settlements.‡ The defence of the marches being an object of great importance, it was made felony to permit any enemies or rebels to pass them; all proprietors of march lands were obliged to reside there themselves, or leave, when absent, sufficient deputies, on pain of losing their estates; and all persons near the marches, between sixteen and sixty years of age, were to be ready to repair, on warning, in suitable array, to their defence.

Doomed to suffer by the peculiar oppressions of both countries, Ireland was harassed not only by her own ancient exaction, coyne and livery, but also by the English mode of extortion, purveyance; and against both these heavy grievances one of the acts of Poy-

* In describing the state of public feeling, with respect to Warbeck, on his first appearance, Hall says, "In Ireland there be two kind of men; one soft, gentle, civil, and courteous; . . . . the other kind is clean contrary from this, for they be wild, rustical, foolish, fierce, and for their unmannerly behavior and rude passions are called wild and savage Irishmen. To these wild colts," (he adds) "Perkin showed hym selfe first."

† Cox.

‡ There occur some striking remarks in Spenser (*View of the State of Ireland,*) on the great strength of national character evinced by the Irish in thus forcing the native language upon the victor. "For it hath ever been," he says, "the use of the conqueror to despise the language of the conquered, and to force him by all means to learn his. So did the Romans always use, insomuch that there is almost no nation in the world but is sprinkled with their language. It were good, therefore, meseems, to search out the original cause of this evil, ... for I think it very strange that the English being so many, and the Irish so few, as they then were left, the fewer should draw the more into their use."

nings' parliament was directed. The general use of bows and arrows was, as usual, enjoined, and the wild war-cries adopted by some of the great English families, in imitation of the natives, were strictly forbidden, as watchwords of faction, and provocatives of riot.*

As the chief object of most of the enactments of this parliament was to break down, or at least reduce, the enormous power of the lords of the Pale, a measure was again, at this time, brought forward, which had been already, more than once, suspended over them; and an act for the resumption, with some few exceptions, of all the grants made by the crown since the last days of the reign of king Edward II., was passed in this parliament. With the same view, it was held to be necessary to make an example of the earl of Kildare; and, although the charges against him appear to have rested upon little more than suspicion, he was by an act of this parliament attainted for high treason; and his brother James and several other Geraldines were also declared traitors. Such, with the addition of a law enacting that "the lords of Ireland should wear in parliament the same sort of robes as were worn by the English lords in the parliament of England," were the whole of the statutes passed at Drogheda, under the government of sir Edward Poynings.

These laws, when first enacted, extended no farther than the narrow limits of the Pale; but, according as the authority of the crown increased, their effect and influence gained ground, until at length they came to be in force over the entire kingdom.

In the "great treaty of commerce" signed, at this time, between England and the Netherlands, a provision was, at Henry's desire, inserted expressly stipulating that the duchess of Burgundy should not be permitted to aid or harbour the king's rebels, under pain of losing her domains. As Warbeck, therefore, against whom this article was levelled, could no longer remain in Flanders, he set sail once more for Ireland,† hoping to enlist the people of that country in his cause. Finding, however, in this, his second attempt, but little support or encouragement, he set sail from Cork to Scotland, having been recommended to James IV., then ruler of that kingdom, not only by the duchess of Burgundy, but in private letters from the king of France and from Maximilian the emperor. A. D. 1495.

Once more, therefore, do we find this phantom of the historic scene assuming the semblance of royalty, and moving about among kings and princes as their acknowledged equal. Having been announced by the duchess to James as "the prince of England," that monarch received him with royal honours, at the palace of Stirling, addressing him publicly as "cousin." Whether James really believed in Warbeck's story, it is not easy to discover. But that, early in the course of the plot, he had been engaged in secret correspondence with the duchess of Burgundy, and made himself, on one occasion, the medium of communication between her and Ireland, appears curiously from the Scottish records.‡ Whatever his secret opinion or knowledge on the subject may have been, his whole conduct implied a belief in the truth of Warbeck's claims; and he now did not hesitate to bestow on him the hand of the fair Catherine Gordon, a lady of remarkable beauty, the daughter of the earl of Huntley, and grand-daughter of James I.

About this time, Hugh O'Donnell, the chief of Tyrconnel, returned from a visit to the Scottish court, whither he had gone, it is supposed, to consult with king James on matters relating to the cause and fortunes of Perkin Warbeck. But, out of the precincts of the English Pale, little interest appears to have been taken in this adventurer; and it is far more probable that the object of O'Donnell's visit to Scotland, where he was received by the king with all due honour and state,§ was to ask for aid for himself in the warfare

* The war-cry of the Butlers was *Butler-abo*, meaning, according to Ware, the cause of the Butlers. The earl of Kildare's cry was, *Crom-abo*,—from a small castle, says the same authority, called *Crom*, belonging to that family. See, for the cries of the other great lords and chiefs, Ware, *Antiq.* chap. 21.

† This second visit of the impostor, by order of Margaret, to Ireland, is thus quaintly recorded by Bernard Andreas, the poet laureate and historiographer of Henry VII.:—"Innone illum revocante, in Flandriam profectus est. Post in Hyberniam coronationis gratia prospero vento delatus, magnam barbarorum illius insulæ partem suis callidissimis subornavit tractationibus."—Cited by Ellis, from a MS. in the British Museum.

‡ It is generally believed, that Warbeck's connexion with James commenced shortly before his arrival at this time in Scotland; but Mr. Tytler, in his able and valuable work (*History of Scotland*, vol. iv. chap. 3.) has shown that this monarch had long held secret communication both with the duchess of Burgundy and with Warbeck, and, in more than one instance, had been made the medium of their correspondence with Ireland. So early as the year 1491, the following entry, it appears, is found in the Treasurer's Books:—"Given, at the king's command, to an Englishman called Edward Ormond, that brought letters forth of Ireland franking Edward's son, and the earl of Desmond, ix lb."

§ "He was received by the king," says Tytler, "with great state and distinction,"—in proof of which the following items from the Treasurer's Accounts are given.—"Item, passing with letters in the east and south-landis, for the receiving of great Odonnel, x shillings. Item, to master Alexr Schawe's expenses, passing fra the town of Air to Edinburgh, for the cupboard, and remaining there upon the king's clothing, to the receiving of Odonnel, xx shillings."

he was then engaged in with a brother chieftain, O'Connor of Connaught. On his return, a great battle was fought between them, in which O'Donnell was the victor; and, immediately after, he laid siege to the castle of Sligo. But, on the arrival of Ulick Burke, lord of Clanricarde, with a large army, O'Donnell hastily withdrew.

In consequence of his having been attainted by Poynings' parliament, the earl of Kildare had been sent in custody to England, where he still remained a prisoner; and so deeply did his lady, the countess, feel this event, that it was the cause, we are told, of her death. One of the charges urged against him was, that he had sacrilegiously
A. D. 1496. burnt down the church of Cashel; and the success of the defence made by him, when examined, respecting this outrage, in the royal presence, shows, if true, that the monarch's relish for Irish simplicity and humour was somewhat more awake than his sense of dignity or of justice. Confessing the fact of his having burned down the church, Kildare pleaded, as his excuse, that "he thought the archbishop was in it;" which, being said with an odd bluntness peculiar to this lord, had the effect of at once amusing and prepossessing the king in his favour;—such natural frankness appearing incompatible with the finesse and intrigue attributed to Kildare.

Henry had advised him, on the first hearing of his case, to provide himself with good counsel, adding, that his cause, he feared, would require it. "I will then choose," said the earl, "the best counsel in England." "And who is that?" asked Henry. "Marry, the king himself," replied Kildare. "Whereat," says the chronicler, "the king laughed." So much, however, did all this simplicity of manner win upon the royal mind, that, when the counsel against Kildare, in concluding his charge, said vehemently, that "not all Ireland could govern this man," the king replied, "Then is he the fittest man to govern all Ireland."

The earl's cause accordingly triumphed; the chief O'Hanlon, with whom it was asserted he had conspired against the lord deputy, came forward to clear him upon oath; and he was not only restored by the king to honour and estate, but, by letters patent, of the 6th of August this year, made lord lieutenant of Ireland. The king thought it prudent to retain, as a hostage for Kildare's fidelity, his eldest son, Gerald. But whatever suspicion had hitherto fallen on this lord's loyalty, no such reproach appears to have attended him during the remainder of his long career; nor could he, at all events, be charged as deficient in that most essential evidence of loyalty—incessant warfare against the Irish. He had but a short time, indeed, received the sword from his predecessor, when he set out on an expedition against O'Brian of Thomond, and took by assault the castle of Feyback, belonging to Finnin Mac Namara. He afterwards stormed and destroyed the castle of Ballynetty, as well as some other fortified places, and returned in triumph to Dublin.

The flattering prospects opened to Warbeck by the zealous part the Scottish monarch had taken in his behalf having now entirely vanished, the unfortunate adventurer, whom James to the last had continued to treat with all the respect due to his assumed rank, resolved to try once more his fortune in Ireland; and a vessel and a guard of thirty horse having been provided for him by his generous protector, he sailed, accompanied by his beautiful consort, for Cork. There he was joined, soon after his landing, by the
A. D. 1497. earl of Desmond, with a force of 2400 men; and, as Waterford was then the stronghold of loyalty, they marched directly against that city, and prepared to invest it. A fleet, at the same time, was ordered to Passage, consisting of eleven ships, to make an attack from the river, and also to land an additional body of troops.

For eleven days, the besieged citizens continued to defend themselves with unflinching spirit; and, at length, becoming in their turn assailants, they attacked the enemy in their own quarters, till they compelled them to raise the siege. Having taken, in one of their sallies, a considerable number of prisoners, they carried them all to the market-place, and cutting off their heads, left them stuck on high stakes, as memorials of their victory. On another occasion, the cannon planted on Reginald's Tower, having battered in the side of one of the enemy's ships, the whole of the crew, we are told, perished.* Discouraged by all these losses, Desmond found himself compelled to raise the siege; while

* Leland. Lodge. Smith (*Natural and Civil History of Waterford*, p. 124.) Tuckey (*Cork Remembrancer*, ad ann. 1497.)

In deference to these and other Irish authorities, the above particulars of this alleged siege are given. But a letter addressed, this year, by the king himself, to sir Gilbert Talbot, contains a statement so wholly at variance with the received account of Desmond's proceedings, as to bring into suspicion not merely the details, but the fact itself of this siege of Waterford, having ever occurred. Henry thus writes;—"Trusty and well beloved, we grete you wele, signifying unto you that wher as Perkin Warbek and his wif were lately sette ful porely to the see by the king of Scottes, and aftre that landed within our land of Irland in the wylde Irissherie, where he had be taken by our cousins Th' erls of Kildare and Desmond, if he and his said wif had not secretly stolen away."—*Ellis' Original Letters.*

Warbeck, embarking at Passage, made his way back to Cork, and from thence sailed to Cornwall, being closely pursued by four ships that had been sent from Waterford to apprehend him.

The only farther connexion with Ireland that remains to be noticed in this adventurer's fate, was the closing scene of his strange life, which took place in the year 1499; when, having been condemned as guilty of treason, he was executed at Tyburn, and, with him, suffered the first who espoused his adventurous cause, John Waters, mayor of Cork. His other Irish abettor, the earl of Desmond, was far more fortunate in his fate. Notwithstanding the overt and daring part he had taken in this youth's behalf, the king, with that clemency which, throughout his reign, he had so many opportunities of evincing, freely pardoned him all his offences, and even received him into favour.

The petty warfare in which Kildare became now involved with some of the northern chiefs, and which raged at intervals through the following two or three years, partook too much of the clannish character of the feuds of the Irish themselves, to be narrated at any length as matter of history. In consequence of the unnatural murder of Con O'Neill, by his brother Henry, some years back, the territory of Tyrone had been divided between Henry and Daniel O'Neill; and, in the present year, Henry himself was barbarously assassinated by Tirlogh and Con, the sons of his murdered brother. This act produced a fresh explosion of violence among the whole family; and Kildare, in abetting Tirlogh, was actuated, doubtless, by feelings of relationship no less than by policy, as Tirlogh was his own nephew. Being now joined by O'Donnell, Mac Guire, and other friends of his kinsman, he laid siege to Dungannon, the chief seat of the O'Neills, and taking the castles, both of that town and of Omagh, compelled Neal Mac Art O'Neill, the opponent of his nephew, to submit and give hostages. Shortly after his return from this expedition, the earl marched to Cork, and placing there a strong garrison, exacted similar terms of submission from that city and from Kinsale. A. D. 1498.

In like manner, through the following two or three years, we find this indefatigable veteran carrying triumphantly, through different parts of the kingdom, the terror of the English name and arms. In the course of an expedition into Connaught, he took and garrisoned the castles of Athleague, Roscommon, Tulsk, and Castlereagh, and again marching into Ulster, at the instance probably of his nephew, seized the castle of Kinard, and made Tirlogh governor of it. A. D. 1499.

But all this active course of aggression could not fail, in the end, to awaken a proportionate spirit of resistance; and the native chiefs, finding how unable they were to cope separately with Kildare, resolved to try, at last, the experiment of confederating among themselves. Ulick Burke, lord of Clanricarde, called commonly Mac William,—the head of a powerful sept of "degenerate English,"—was the principal leader of this league, in which were joined also O'Brian, of Thomond, Mac Namara, Melrony O'Carrol, and other chieftains; forming, with their united forces, as it is said, the most powerful native army that had been seen in Ireland since the conquest.

Duly sensible of the responsibility which this unusual effort of the Irish imposed upon him, Kildare collected together all the forces he was able to muster; and being accompanied by all the great Anglo-Irish lords, as well as by the mayor of Dublin, with a band of armed men, the bishop of Ardah, and one or two native chiefs, he advanced the royal standard against the rebels. At the hill of Knoc-tuadh,* about seven miles from Galway, the two armies encountered; and after an obstinate conflict, the result of which was for some time doubtful, the victory fell to the earl of Kildare, and the Irish were defeated and routed with great slaughter; their loss being variously estimated at two, four, and even nine thousand men; while, by a sort of miracle, it is said, not a single Englishman in Kildare's army was even hurt. Among the prisoners were the two sons of Ulick of Clanricarde; and the towns of Galway and Athenry surrendered to the victor.† A. D. 1504.

It would appear, from some Irish annals of this period, that in private pique and family differences, between Kildare and the lord of Clanricarde, lay the real source of the hostility that led to this sanguinary battle. But, whatever may have originally provoked the warfare, its triumphant result was of the utmost consequence to the interests of the crown and of the English colony; as the power of the natives to combine successfully against their oppressors had now, to a certain extent, been tried, and had utterly failed;

* Meaning, "the Mount of Axes."

† Of this battle sir John Davies says, "Though the lords and gentlemen of the Pale joined in the famous battle of Knocktow, in Connaught, wherein Mac William, with 4000 of the Irish were slain, yet was not this journey made by warrant from the king, or upon his charge (as it is expressed in the Book of Howth) but only upon a private quarrel of the earl of Kildare; so loosely were the martial affairs of Ireland carried, during the reign of king Henry the seventh.

and the natural consequence was, an increased confidence in their own strength, on the part of the settlers, with a proportionate decline in the spirit and self-reliance of the Irish. So pleased was the king with his deputy's services on this occasion, that, on receiving the account of the victory, he created him a knight of the garter.

During the remainder of this monarch's reign, there occurred no event of any great interest or importance; except that, in spite of all the suspicion attached occasionally to Kildare, we find him in the last year of this reign, at the head of the government, as he had been in the first.

A. D. 1504.

CHAPTER XLV.

HENRY VIII.

Earl of Kildare continued chief governor—his death—is succeeded by his son Gerald.—Military exploits of this earl—is summoned to England on charges of maladministration.—Earl of Surrey lord lieutenant.—Secret designs against Kildare—his reception in England.—Violent proceedings of Desmond—feud between him and the earl of Ormond.—Judicious policy of Surrey—his views seconded by the king—despairs of the conquest of Ireland.—Ormond appointed lord deputy—is supplanted by Kildare.—Treasonable practices of Desmond.—Kildare again summoned to England—is committed to the Tower.—Ormond dispossessed of his title, and created earl of Ossory.—Lord Delvin the new lord deputy—is treacherously seized and kept prisoner by O'Connor.—Surrey's opinions respecting Ireland.—Popularity and triumph of Kildare—is sent as adviser to the new lord deputy, Skeffington—supplants him, and resumes the government.—Combination against him—is again summoned to England—commits the government to his son lord Thomas.—Official reports on the state of Ireland.—Rebellion of lord Thomas Fitz Gerald.—Dublin castle besieged.—Barbarous murder of archbishop Allen.—Lord Thomas invades the territory of the earl of Ossory—enters into a truce with the citizens of Dublin—is excommunicated.—Death of Kildare in the Tower.—Warfare throughout Ireland.—Lord Thomas negotiates for aid from foreign powers.—Siege of Maynooth by the lord deputy.—Surrender of the castle.—Lord Thomas takes refuge with O'Brian.—Threatened invasion of the Pale.—Active services of Ossory and his son.—Loyal conduct of the northern chiefs.—Inefficiency of the lord deputy.—Family feuds among the natives.—Collusive character of the warfare on both sides.—Waste and ruin of the country.—Arrival of lord Leonard Gray.—Submission of O'Connor.—Lord Thomas surrenders in hope of pardon—is conveyed prisoner to England.—Lord Leonard appointed lord deputy.—Destruction of O'Brian's bridge.—Lord Thomas and his five uncles executed together at Tyburn.—Expedition of the lord deputy in Offaley.—Expulsion from thence of O'Connor.—That territory bestowed on the chief's brother Cahir.—Subsequent conduct of the brothers.—Singular parley between the lord deputy and O'Connor.—Young Gerald Fitz Gerald, the younger brother of lord Thomas—his journey with his mother, lady Eleanor, to O'Donnell's country—league in his behalf among the northern chiefs—his cause espoused by the earl of Desmond.—Marriage of lady Eleanor to O'Donnell.—Religious differences beginning to mix with Irish strife.—Fears of concert between the chiefs and the Scottish monarch.—Formidable league between O'Brian and Desmond.—Expedition of the lord deputy into Munster.—Geraldine lords compelled to proffer allegiance.—Desmond defies the lord deputy's power.—Escape of Young Gerald into France—his subsequent adventures.

During the first years of the reign of this prince, the affairs of Ireland attracted but little of his attention or interest. The earl of Kildare was still retained at the head of the government; and all the other public functionaries were left undisturbed in their several offices. The veteran lord justice, during the few remaining years of his life, continued to be engaged in constant warfare with the natives; and, invading successively Munster and Ulster, obtained, in both provinces, his usual meed of success;

A. D. 1509.

though opposed vigorously, in Munster, by a large confederate force, under the joint command of James, eldest son of the earl of Desmond, Tirlogh O'Brian, lord of Thomond, and Mac William, a chief of the sept of the Burkes.

But the termination of this remarkable man's career was now at hand. Resolving to invade Ely O'Carrol, the country of the chieftains of Ely, he marched, at the head of a large army, towards that territory; but, being taken ill on his way, at Athy, he was from thence removed to Kildare, where, in the month of September, 1513, he died, and was buried in St. Mary's chapel, in the choir of Christ Church, Dublin.* On the earl's decease, the council nominated his son Gerald lord justice, and the king afterwards made him, by patent, lord deputy. A. D. 1513.

Inheriting much of the vigour and daring of the late lord, Gerald lost no time in following his example; and, beginning with O'Moore, of Ley, who had bid defiance to his authority, invaded that chieftain's territory, and drove him into his woods. He then attacked the country of Hugh O'Reilly, stormed and rased the castle of Cavan, and, having slain O'Reilly himself, and many of his followers, chased the rest into their inaccessible fastnesses, and burned and ravaged their country. The various achievements of this kind performed by the new lord deputy, in the course of the following three or four years, being wholly devoid of any of those associations or incidents that awaken historical interest, cannot be too succinctly related. In the course of an inroad into Imaly, in the county of Wicklow, he slew Shane O'Toole, a chieftain of that mountainous district, and sent his head to the mayor of Dublin. Advancing his standard then into Ely O'Carrol, he was joined in his invasion of that territory by several noblemen of Munster and Leinster, of English extraction, among whom were Piers Butler, earl of Ormond, and James, the eldest son of the earl of Desmond. Assisted by the forces of these lords, he laid siege to the castle of Limevan, which, after being defended for the space of a week, was deserted by the garrison, and, shortly after, demolished by Kildare. Thus successful, he pushed on rapidly to Clonmel, the inhabitants of which, being taken by surprise, immediately surrendered to him the town; and he returned from his rapid expedition loaded with trophies and spoil.† A. D. 1514. A. D. 1516.

A similar course of success attended his arms the following year in Ulster, when, marching into Lecale, he took by storm the fortified castle of Dundrum, from whence the English had been expelled by the natives; and then, attacking Phelim Macgenis, obtained an easy victory over him, making the chief himself prisoner, and putting to death a number of his followers. From thence, continuing his course into Tyrone, he took and burnt the castle of Dungannon, and spread the horrors of fire and war through the whole of that territory.‡ A. D. 1517.

The little attention paid to Ireland during the first years of Henry's reign, left to a bold and self-willed ruler like Kildare so wide a range of power, and, still worse, of exemption from responsibility, as could not fail to be grossly presumed upon and abused. Of the great lords of the Pale in general, we have more than once had occasion to observe, that, while so unmanageable as subjects, they were no less rash and oppressive as rulers; nor do the instances of earl Gerald and his warlike father form any exception to this general remark,—brute force being the sole instrument of their policy, and conquest, not pacification, their leading object. The very qualities, indeed, that rendered them popular among the natives, were such as unfitted them to be useful or civilizing leaders. They were loved for their leaning to the old lawless customs of the land; and having, by marriage, become connected with some of the principal Irish lords, were regarded, in general, rather as chiefs of a great leading sept, than as acknowledged rulers of the whole kingdom.

Another evil attending the position of an Anglo-Irish chief governer was, the jealousy naturally felt of his great influence over his fellow-countrymen, by those functionaries of English birth who found their own authority cast into the shade, and by a power the most offensive to their prejudices and pride. Some secret schemes, arising out of such feelings, had been found by Kildare, in the year 1518, to be actively at work for his ruin; but, by a prompt and bold vindication of himself to the king, he succeeded, for a time, in baffling the design. In the following year, however, his adversaries, re-enforced by the aid of Wolsey, who had now reached the full meridian of his unparalleled power, returned openly to the attack, and so far succeeded in their hos- A. D. 1519.

* Lodge,—who says, his death was caused "by a shot he had received a little before, from the O'Moores of Leix."

† Cox. Ware's *Annals*.

‡ Cox. Ware's *Annals*.

tile purpose, as to cause Kildare to be summoned to England to answer charges against him for maladministration.* Appointing, by the royal permission, a knight belonging to his own family, sir Thomas Fitz Gerald, of Laccagh, to act as deputy during his absence, the earl hastened over to England, with the view of clearing himself from the serious charges alleged against him.†

In the mean time, attention had been drawn, though as usual, reluctantly, to the condition of Ireland; and, by Wolsey's advice, who deemed it most politic to appoint to the government of that kingdom some English nobleman wholly unconnected with any of its parties or factions, Thomas Howard, earl of Surrey, the son of the lord who won the great victory of Flodden Field‡, was sent thither as lord lieutenant, taking with him only 100 of the king's guard, and 1000 horse and foot. In appointing Surrey to this office, the cardinal is supposed to have accomplished the double object, both of mortifying the man he hated, by depriving Kildare of his government, and removing a rival he dreaded, by sending Surrey to fill his place.

A. D. 1520.

One of the first tasks to which the new lord lieutenant applied himself was that of endeavouring to collect from the servants and Irish followers of Kildare such loose accusations against him, such half truths mixed with fiction, as might when artfully put together assume the semblance of proof. A letter alleged to have been addressed by him to O'Carrol, one of the bravest and most refractory of the Irish chiefs, was, in particular, the object of the lieutenant's inquiry; as in that letter, according to the account he had received of it, the earl had said to his correspondent, "Keep good peace to the Englishmen in Ireland until an English deputy come there. But when any English deputy shall come thither, then do your best to make war upon the English."§

To bring home to Kildare by any evidence, however procured, the charge of having written such a letter, no pains were spared on either side of the channel; and even Surrey gave in so far to the cruel and treacherous policy by which the counsels of his royal master were too often marked, as to suggest that the earl's secretary, William Delahide, the person in whom he most confided, should be sent to the Tower, and there tortured, to force him to give evidence respecting this letter.‖

While, in Ireland, these schemes for his ruin were secretly ripening, Kildare, unconscious, apparently, of his danger, was waiting, in England, the decision of Wolsey, to whom the charges against him had been referred by the king: nor, in the mean time, were there any indications in the manner of his reception at the English court,—notwithstanding the angry tone in which Henry speaks of him in his letters to Surrey,¶—from which it could be concluded that he was at all in disgrace. On the contrary, at the celebrated interview which took place between Henry and the French monarch, on the Field of the Cloth of Gold, we find Kildare among the train of distinguished noblemen who composed, on that occasion, the splendid retinue of the English king. He was also paying, at this time, his addresses to the lady Elizabeth Gray, daughter of the Marquis of Dorset, to whom he was afterwards married; and Surrey adverts, in one of his letters, to the rumour current in Ireland of a projected marriage between Kildare and "a kinswoman of the king," as well as to the alarm felt amongst the English lest he should be again sent to assume the government.**

The spirit of the natives had been, in the mean time, kept in check by the earl of Surrey; and the only chieftain of any great mark who had resisted his authority, was Con O'Neill, lord of Tyrone. The lord lieutenant, however, compelled this chief to take refuge in his fastnesses, and at length reduced him to obedience.

With that reckless defiance of all laws, save those of their own fierce will, which so much characterized the noble house of Desmond, the present earl of this title had, not only without the leave of the lord lieutenant, but in direct opposition to his orders, invaded

* In a letter (A. D. 1520) from the king to the lord lieutenant and council, frequent reference is made to the charges against Kildare:—"Shewing farthermore suche conspiracye, as by meanes of the erle of Kildare his servauntes, is daylie there made with the Irishe rebelles ayeinst you."—"As touching the sedicious practices, conspiracies, and subtill driftes of the erle of Kildare, his servauntes, ayders and assisters."—*State Papers.*, II.

† Ware's *Annals*.

‡ Pedigree of Howard.—See *Hist. and antiq. of the Castle and Town of Arundel*, by the Rev. M. A. Tierney. Dr. Lingard, by a slight oversight, makes the hero of Flodden and the lord lieutenant of Ireland the same person.

§ "Except" he adds, "such as bee towardes me, whom ye know wele your silf."

‖ Surrey to Wolsey, *S. P.* VII.

¶ "As touching the sedicious practices, conspiracies, and subtill driftes of the erle of Kildare, his servauntes, ayders, and assisters."—Henry VIII. to the Lord Lieutenant and Council of Ireland, *S. P.* II.

** State Papers, VII.

the territories of Cormac Oge and Mac Arthy Reagh, two Irish lords of great power.* These chiefs, however, having formed a league with sir Thomas Desmond, the deadly foe of the earl, advanced to meet the aggressors, and a conflict ensued, in which Cormac's party were completely victorious. The earl's kinsman, sir John Fitz Gerald, was slain on the field, and sir John of Desmond, and others of the Geraldines, wounded and made prisoners; while the loss of troops on their side, is calculated at eighteen banners of galloglasses, and twenty-four banners of horsemen.†

This signal defeat of the earl of Desmond, however well merited, was regarded by Surrey as fraught with mischief to the English; for, as the victorious party were mostly natives, this brilliant success, he feared, would lead them and others of their fellow countrymen to feel more confidence in their own prowess, and rate less highly the strength and spirit of the English. There was also reason, he thought, to apprehend that Desmond, with a view to repair his disaster, would seek alliance with some of the more powerful Irish captains, and, by the sacrifice of a part of his possessions, secure the means of obtaining revenge.

Between this lord and the earl of Ormond there had prevailed, for some time, dissensions, in which the old feud of their families, during the wars of the two Roses, was, in another shape, revived; the earl of Ormond being a staunch friend to the English interests, while Desmond, from the mixed relationship in which he stood to the two races, combining the aristocracy of the one with the chieftancy of the other, was alternately trusted and suspected by both parties, and, according as it chanced, was friend or traitor to each in their turns. By the judicious and amicable management of Surrey, a reconciliation was effected between these two lords; and, at the same time, Cormac Oge and Mac Carthy Reagh bound themselves by pledges to keep peace towards the earl of Desmond. In the account which Surrey himself has given of this transaction, we find the following eulogium on these two Irish chiefs:—"They are two wise men; and I found them more conformable to order than some Englishmen here."‡ In the same discriminating spirit he suggests that power should be delegated to him to confer the order of knighthood on such of the Irish captains as should appear to him worthy of such a distinction; and the king, in adopting his suggestion, thus creditably extends and improves upon it:—"We grant that ye not only make O'Neal and such lords of the Irishrie as ye shall think good, knights, but also to give unto the said O'Neal a collar of gold of our livery."§

Throughout the remaining period of Surrey's administration, so far were the efforts made by him for the pacification of the kingdom from being attended with any success, that even the faint dawnings of order and peace, that had seemed for a while to arise from the policy pursued by him, were all again clouded and lost; and the settled conclusion to which, as he himself states, his personal knowledge of the country had led him, was, that by conquest alone could the Irish be ever reduced to order or peace; and that to conquer them would, for reasons forcibly stated by him, be difficult, if not wholly impossible.‖ He was himself, indeed, sufficiently versed in the warfare of the Irish, to enable him to judge on this point,—having been engaged in constant struggles, during his lieutenancy, with the O'Carrols, the O'Moores, the O'Connors, and the Connells; and in the course of a late expedition against these chiefs, one of the bravest of his officers, sir Edward Plunket, lord of Dunsany, fell on the field. Having, for some time, earnestly entreated of the king to release him from his arduous and hopeless charge, and being, moreover, seriously indisposed with a sort of dysentery, then prevalent in Ireland, Surrey was permitted to vacate his office, towards the close of the year 1521; and sir Piers Butler,¶ his intimate friend and adviser, was appointed lord deputy in his place. A. D. 1521.

The sudden loss to the inhabitants of the Pale, of a leader so thoroughly possessed of their confidence, was felt the more seriously from his likewise taking away with him the whole of the forces that had accompanied him from England. At the same time, the Scots of the Isles continued to menace invasion; being in league—especially those called

* State Papers, VII.

† Under every banner of galloglasses there were generally eighty men, and from twenty to fifty under every banner of horsemen.

‡ Surrey to Wolsey, *S. P.* XIII. § Henry VIII. to Surrey, *S. P.* XII.

‖ "It is not to be dowted, that whensoever the Irishmen shall know that your grace enteadith a conqwest, they woll all combyne to gyders, and withstonde the same to the best off their poure."—Surrey to Henry VIII., *S. P.* XX.

¶ Eighth earl of Ormond; but described by the king, in a letter written about this time, as "pretending himself to be erle of Ormond." In consequence of the earnest wish of sir Thomas Boleyn to possess the title of Ormond, the king had made instances to sir Piers Butler to surrender to Boleyn that earldom; and, after some hesitation, Butler complied with the royal request, and, in lieu of his ancient and rightful title, was created, in the following year, earl of Ossory.

the Irish Scots—with certain chiefs of the north of Ireland; and signs of disaffection had already appeared among some of the great native lords. In this state of things,
A. D. 1522. the council of Ireland addressed a petition to Wolsey, praying that, as a means of awing both Scots and Irish, the king would send five or six of his ships to scour the seas between the two countries.*

The mutual hatred that had so long subsisted between Kildare and Ormond was by no means abated by the marriage of the latter with Kildare's sister, and broke out with refreshed virulence on the appointment of Ormond to be lord deputy, when one of the first uses of his acquired power was to demolish several castles belonging to his adversary. With the view of composing this unseemly strife, commissioners were sent by the king from England, to make inquiry into the grounds of their variance, to hear the complaints and answers of both parties, and frame articles of peace upon which both could agree. It has been asserted of these commissioners, that they were influenced by partial feelings towards Kildare, having been chosen at the instance of his father-in-law, the marquis of Dorset. Whatever grounds there may be for this notion, it is certain, so favourable to Kildare was the report of the commissioners, that, in a few days after, the
A. D. 1524. earl of Ormond was removed from the government, and his triumphant rival appointed deputy in his stead. The only result, indeed, hitherto, of all the intrigues against this extraordinary man, had been but to prove to the court the extent of his power, and show them how ill they could do without him.

After taking the oath customary on such an appointment, the new lord deputy, attended by his kinsman, Con O'Neill, who carried before him the sword of state, proceeded to the abbey of St. Thomas, and there entertained the nobles and commissioners at a splendid banquet.†

But this prosperous aspect of Kildare's fortunes was not left long undisturbed. His kinsman, Desmond, who was looking to bolder objects than mere party triumphs, had, in the year 1523, entered into a treaty with the French king, who was then contemplating an invasion of Ireland.‡ By this compact Desmond bound himself to join that monarch's army, on its landing, with a force of 400 horsemen and 10,000 infantry; and never to lay down his arms until he had conquered a portion of the island for himself, and the remainder for sir Richard de la Pole, who, through his marriage with Margaret, the daughter of George, duke of Clarence, was representative of the royal house of York. But this strange alliance, which could only have been resorted to by Francis, as a means of dividing and distracting the English force, appears to have been never again thought of by him; and Desmond was left to bear all the approbrium of his treason, without reaping any of its expected rewards. Orders were issued to the lord deputy to arrest him, and Kildare marched into Munster for that purpose. But, whether suspicious of some such design, or apprised of it, secretly, as was thought, by the deputy himself, Desmond contrived to elude pursuit; nor could all the efforts of James Butler, and the other enemies of the Geraldines, succeed in effecting his arrest.§

Joining his forces shortly after with those of his kinsman Con O'Neill, Kildare proceeded to attack O'Donnell, the chief of Tyrconnel; but on learning that Hugh O'Neill, the claimant against Con, had risen in Tyrone, they concluded a truce with O'Donnell, and, turning their arms against O'Neill, entirely defeated that chief and slew him.

Mean while, it was rumoured that the lord deputy had written to invite his kinsman Desmond to a private interview, and had also engaged the O'Byrnes, a sept of Wicklow, in that lord's service. Every new instance of Kildare's influence over the natives was assumed by the English as a new ground for suspecting and persecuting him; and as proofs were said to be forthcoming of his disloyal correspondence with Desmond he was now summoned over to England to answer an impeachment on this and other charges.

The chief accusations against him were,—1. That he had not according to the
A. D. 1526. king's orders apprehended the earl of Desmond. 2. That he had formed alliance with several of the king's Irish enemies. 3. That he had caused certain loyal subjects to be hanged for no other reason but that they were dependants on the family of the Butlers. 4. That he had confederated with O'Neill, O'Conner, and other Irish lords, to invade the territories of the earl of Ormond, then lord deputy.‖

* State Papers, XXIX. † Ware's *Annals*.

‡ Francis, says Duchesne (*Hist. d'Angleterre*,) "fist alliance au mois de Juin, avec Jacques comte de Desmond, prince Irlandois, qui lui promit, entre autres choses, qu'aussi tost qu'il envoyé des forces dedans l'Irlande, il guerroieroit à personne, et à ses despens, le roy Henry, non seulement pour conquerir en son profit la partie d'Irlande qu'il tenoit, horsmis l'un des ports et chasteaux de Quinque salle, Kore, ou Brudal, qui demeureroit au roi François, pour la conservation de ses navires, mais aussi," &c. &c. The castles whose names are here so successfully disguised were those of Kinsale, Cork, and Youghall.

§ Archbishop Inge to Wolsey, *S. P.* XLIV. ‖ Ware's *Annals*.

From Wolsey, who had always been his enemy, no mercy could be expected by Kildare. He was immediately committed to the Tower, and, according to some accounts, condemned to suffer death. But no faith is to be placed in this statement. Some form of trial must necessarily have preceded his condemnation; and of such an event no record exists. After lying, for some time, in prison, he was at length released by the interposition of Surrey, now duke of Norfolk, who, together with the marquis of Dorset, Kildare's father-in-law, and several other persons of high station, became sureties for his future faith and allegiance.

Kildare, on departing for England, had left as his deputy a kinsman of his own, James Fitz Gerald, of Leixlip, who, being suspected, however, of shaping his policy too much with a view to his noble relative's interests, was, in a short time, removed from the government, and Richard Nugent, baron of Delvin, was made lord deputy in his place.

It might have been supposed that the absence in England of those two great rivals, Kildare and Ormond—the latter of whom had been lately deprived of this title and created earl of Ossory—would have left to lord Delvin a comparatively smooth and unembarrassed tenure of power. But such was by no means the case; for there soon arose out of the absence of these two noblemen a greater danger than ever could result from their presence; as both the Irish and English rebels, presuming on the want of any strong hand to control them, were preparing on all sides to rise in open revolt: and a daring act committed by O'Connor, chief of Offaley, had set such an example of bold and lawless defiance as spread consternation throughout the whole Pale.

To this O'Connor, as well as to the other chiefs bordering upon the Pale, it had long been a custom of the English settlers, as unwise as it was degrading, to pay annual pensions, or tributes, as a means of buying off their hostility, and securing exemption from their inroads.* In consequence, however, of some depredations committed by the present chief of Offaley, his wages, or Black Rent, as it was called, had been, of late, withheld; and, on his remonstrating against this act, a parley was appointed to be held between him and the vice-deputy, at a castle belonging to sir William Darcy, called Rathyn. It became soon, however, apparent, that peaceful parley was by no means the object of O'Connor; for, immediately on the meeting taking place, a party of his followers, whom he had posted in ambush, sallied out upon the lord deputy, and, after killing and wounding several of his attendants, made that lord himself prisoner.† A. D. 1528.

This daring act of treachery excited alarm throughout the whole English settlement; and the council of Ireland, reluctantly availing themselves of the popularity of the name of Kildare, chose his brother, sir Thomas Fitz Gerald, to fill the imprisoned deputy's place. Mean while, efforts were made, but wholly in vain, to prevail upon O'Connor to give lord Delvin his liberty; and a letter is extant, from lord Butler to archbishop Inge,‡ giving an account of his passing a night under O'Connor's roof, and obtaining with difficulty, a short interview with the noble prisoner, during which the chieftain and his two brothers insisted on being present. In order to guard, too, against any secrets that might pass between them, the two friends were compelled to speak openly and in Irish. It was strongly suspected that in all these violent proceedings O'Connor was secretly abetted by Kildare, to one of whose daughters the chief was married.§

Nor was it only between the settlers and the natives that the game of strife was thus, as usual, in full play. The feuds of the English among themselves were no less bitterly carried on; and not only did Desmond and Ossory still maintain their mutual strife, but the family of the latter lord were divided into fierce factions among themselves; and both Edmond Butler, archbishop of Cashel, the natural son of lord Ossory, and sir James Butler, another of this lord's kinsmen, were among the most staunch and vehement abettors of the earl of Desmond.‖

Among those personages of high station, to whom, in the usual rapid succession, the administration of the government of Ireland was deputed, during this reign, there appears to have been none in whom the condition, both present and future, of that country had inspired so earnest, and, according to the lights of his time, intelligent an interest, as in the worthy duke of Norfolk, who, when earl of Surrey, was lord lieutenant, as we have seen, of that kingdom, and retained ever after the strong hold he had gained on the affec-

* A still worse and more recreant practice had become frequent at this period, which is thus described in a letter from Norfolk to Wolsey:—"The most part of the marchers upon Irishe men, perceyving not how to be defended, have so patysed (practised) with the Irishe men next adjoyning to them, that the seide Irishe men do come thorow them, and do hurt to others within them, and they take no hurt."—*S. P.* LI.

† The council of Ireland to Wolsey, *S. P.* XLV.

‡ State Papers, XLVII.

§ O'Connor married lady Mary Fitz Gerald, Kildare's daughter by his first wife.

‖ State Papers, LIII.

tions of the Anglo-Irish, as well as his own earnest desire to promote among them good government and peace.

As the opinions of so active and trusty a public officer, respecting a state of affairs with which he was himself personally conversant, cannot fail to possess considerable interest, a few remarks, which occur in his letters and official papers, may here be appropriately noticed. It was Surrey's opinion, as expressed by himself in a letter to Wolsey, that "this land (Ireland) will never be brought to due obeisance, but only with compulsion and conquest;"* and he adds, "most humbly I beseech your grace that, if the king's pleasure be not to go thorough with the conquest of this land, which would be a marvellous charge, no longer to suffer me to waste his grace's treasure here." In reference to this opinion, the king, in writing to his lieutenant, desires him to state "by what means and ways that land could be reduced to obedience and good order;" and it is observable that Surrey's answer, while professing to comply with the royal command, dwells far more on the obstacles in the way of such an enterprise, than on any means he is able to suggest for its accomplishment. Among the difficulties which he foresees in his scheme, that of stocking the land anew with inhabitants, after the destruction of its whole indigenous race,—for on nothing less does this military speculator seem to calculate,—appears to strike him as the most puzzling. At the very time, too, when the English monarch and his minister were thus coolly inquiring into the means of exterminating the Irish, it appears from a statement in one of Surrey's letters that there were then "but few English inhabitants in the four shires of the Pale."†

With all his bias against the natives in general, the noble lieutenant could yet do justice to individual Irishmen. We have seen how favourable was his opinion of the two great chiefs, Cormac Oge and Mac Arthy Reagh; and, in speaking of the readiness of these lords to hold their lands from the king, he adds, "I know divers other Irishmen of like mind." Even when removed from the government of Ireland, Surrey was frequently applied to by the lords of the Irish council, either for his advice in particular emergencies, or the exertion of his interest and influence with the king.

In the month of June, this year, the duke of Richmond, the king's natural son was appointed lieutenant of Ireland; and, shortly after, sir William Skeffington, the A. D. 1530. new lord deputy, arrived in Dublin, accompanied by the earl of Kildare. A solemn procession of the mayor and citizens came to meet them, on the green of St. Mary's abbey; and the sight of the popular favourite, Kildare, returning once more, triumphant over his enemies, excited among all classes the liveliest feelings of joy.

It is a proof, indeed, how powerful was, even then, the Irish party,—for such Kildare's may fairly be called,—that, though having against him the crown, the ministers, and most of the English nobility of both countries, he yet thus triumphed over them all; and, by the mere force of the will of the Irish, was restored to his high station. He had been charged openly, by his rival Ossory, with offences amounting to high treason. Not only was the treacherous seizure of the lord deputy alleged to have been planned between him and his son-in-law, O'Connor, but also a general rising of the natives, for the extirpation of the English Pale,‡ was said in like manner to have been concerted by him, to follow that daring outrage. Under such enormous charges, had he been sustained by the favour of the court or the minister, the impunity with which he continued to defy his accusers would not have been so remarkable. But this was by no means Kildare's case: in the eyes of an autocrat, like Henry, so blunt and self-willed a servant was not likely to make himself acceptable; nor would the cardinal, who is known to have hated the whole race of the Geraldines, see reason to exempt from the range of this feeling the too popular and ungovernable Kildare.

No stronger evidence, indeed, is wanting of the resistless force of this lord's Irish popularity, than the fact that Wolsey, though sure of being supported by all the first English and Anglo-Irish nobles, yet did not venture, during the two or three years of Kildare's detention in England, to deprive him of his office of lord deputy;—being apprehensive, as he himself states, that such an act of authority would, at that crisis, be attended with serious danger; and, that, if the earl's "kinsfolks, the O'Connors, and other such wild Irish lords," should learn that he was actually deprived of his office, they would, "for revenge thereof, overrun the whole English bounds and Pale."§ He therefore recom-

* State Papers, XV.

† Surrey to King Henry VIII., *S. P.* XX.

‡ "After the taking of the baron of Delvyn, tretowrously, by the erle of Kildare's son in lawe Oconour, all the Irishry determyned to have joyned in ayd with the said Oconour for the distruction of your English Pale, through the practise of the said Erle, trustyng that your grace therby wolbe moved to release him of his duress, and to send him to rule here agayne."—Ossory to King Henry VIII., *S. P.* XLIX.

§ Wolsey to Vannes, *S. P.* XLIX.

mends, as the only expedient for keeping them quiet, that they should be still left in the hope of their favourite's return; adding, as a farther advantage of this policy, the restraint it would impose on Kildare himself, who being, as lord deputy, responsible for the peace of the kingdom, would endeavour to prevent any such outbreaks, on the part of his adherents, as might furnish fresh grounds for his own impeachment and disgrace.

Even Norfolk, though boasting the blood of the hero of Flodden in his veins, and likewise acquainted, by personal experience, with Irish warfare, was hardly less anxious than Wolsey himself to avoid provoking that people into resistance; and, in one of his letters to the cardinal, after remarking that "the Irishmen were never so strong as now," he admits that the only remedy which appears to him feasible is, either to send thither Kildare himself, or, at least to continue his brother James in the government.

The sort of compromise that would naturally arise out of this balance of difficulties, has been seen in the appointment of sir William Skeffington to be lord deputy, attended by Kildare, as, professedly, his adviser, but, in reality, his powerful rival, and destined successor.* An invasion of O'Moore's territory, then called Leix, or Ley, to punish that chief, for some acts of hostility, was the first achievement of the new lord deputy; and shortly after, accompanied by Kildare, he made an inroad into Ulster, where, having taken and demolished the castle of Kinard, they laid waste the neighbouring districts, and returned laden with spoil. A. D. 1531.

But, while thus, apparently, acting in concert, these rival leaders were every day becoming more rancorous towards each other; and both, eager to pre-occupy the king on the subject of their differences, sent off letters and messengers to England charged with mutual criminations. At length, impatient of thus bandying reproaches, and confident in his own personal influence, Kildare set sail for England, and there pleaded his suit so successfully, that he caused Skeffington to be removed from the government, and himself appointed in his place. A. D. 1532.

Received in Dublin with acclamations, on his return, and presuming too sanguinely on the new turn of his fortunes, Kildare now threw himself, without any reserve, into Irish alliances and connexions; gave one of his daughters in marriage to O'Connor, of Offaley, and the other to Fergananym O'Carrol.—both of these chiefs obstinate enemies of the crown of England;†—and, falling with his army on the county of Kilkenny, burned and wasted the lands of his rival, the earl of Ossory. About the same time, Con O'Neill, at his instigation, joined with him and his brother James in an invasion of the county of Louth, where, having burned down the English villages, they ravaged and depopulated the country, and drove away all the cattle.

Another petty war, of the same description, in which the lord deputy, about this time engaged, was attended with consequences that threatened danger to his life. In the course of a violent feud which had broken out in the family of his son-in-law, O'Carrol, the castle of Bir, belonging to this chief, had been seized by the adverse party; and Kildare undertook, on the side of his kinsman, to lay siege to and recover the castle. But, while directing, in person, an attack upon it, he received a bullet-shot in the side,‡ from the serious effects of which he never after, it is said, entirely recovered. A. D. 1533.

While the lord deputy pursued thus fearlessly his usual self-willed course, he was surrounded by watchful enemies, who lost no opportunity of reporting to the king exaggerated accounts of all that was eccentric in his conduct; and among the most bitter of these spies was his old enemy Ossory, who, being in correspondence with Cromwell, then rising fast in the king's favour, enjoyed thus a channel through which his charges could be levelled with sure effect. The son of this earl, lord James Butler, had, on Kildare's appointment to the government, received the staff of lord high treasurer, as some counterbalance to the deputy's power; and, accordingly, though nephew to Kildare, he employed all the means in his power, as well by intrigue as openly and officially, to embarrass the course of his kinsman's government. Sir William Skeffington, having been supplanted by the present lord deputy, was another of his most unforgiving opponents; and the Irish council, in sending John Alen, the master of the rolls, to represent to the king the dangers and grievances of Ireland, were supposed at the same time to have privately instructed him to lay serious charges of misgovernment against Kildare.

* According to Ossory, Kildare's object, at this time, was to "compell the Irishe to combynde and confedre with him, having noo regard to the kinge's deputie, and to make all the land beleve the deputie is sent but oonly to bee an instrument to him."

† Ware's *Annals*.

‡ "My lord of Kildare was shott with a hand gon thorow the syde, under the ribbes, and so lyeth in great danger."—Walter Cowley to Cromwell, *S. P.* LXII.

To maintain his ground against so powerful a combination, unsupported, as he was, by any of the great English families, appeared hardly possible; and yet that some desperate attempt at resistance was at one time meditated by him, is rendered highly probable by his having recently furnished his castles and fastnesses—more especially those of Maynooth and Ley—with guns, pikes, and ammunition out of the royal stores.* The general prevalence, too, of a belief, in Ireland, that he would defy any order recalling him from his government, is shown by a passage in a letter from Ossory to Cromwell:—"Men think here," says the writer, "that all the parchment and wax in England will not bring Kildare thither again."†

This experiment, however, was now about to be tried. In consequence of the many public, and, still more, the private, complaints made of his goverment, the lord deputy was summoned, about the close of this year, to repair to England, and answer the charges alleged against him. Though far from manifesting, as had been apprehended, any disposition to resist this order, the earl procrastinated his departure; sent his countess before him into England, in the hope that her influence might avert the royal displeasure; and at length, with an unwillingness that seemed to foretoken the dark fate which hung over him and his noble house, sailed for England in the spring of the year, leaving, as vice-deputy, his son, lord Thomas Fitz Gerald, a youth who had scarcely reached his one-and-twentieth year.

A. D. 1534.

In the instructions given to Alen by the council of Ireland, empowering him to inform the king of the state of his Irish dominions, we find some facts alleged which are worthy of special notice. It appears, so narrowed at this time was the extent of the English authority, that, as the instructions express it, "neither the English order, tongue, nor habit, was used, nor the king's laws obeyed, above twenty miles in compass;"‡ and the council declare it to be their opinion, that, unless the laws be duly executed, the "little place," meaning the Pale, "which is now obedient," will be reduced to the same condition as the remainder of the kingdom.

Among the causes assigned for this rapid decay of the land, that to which the council attributes most influence was the practice adopted, of late, among the Englishrie, of taking Irish tenants. Hence the race, they say, of English husbandmen had declined, and instead of a retinue of respectable yeomen who lived under their lord's roof, there was now substituted a rabble of horsemen and kerne, supported by exaction from the king's subjects. The other abuses by which they account for the decline of English power, are,—1. The liberties and royalties enjoyed by a few absolute lords. 2. The black rents and tributes extorted by the Irish. 3. The frequent change of deputies, and the appointment to that office of native lords. 4. The negligent keeping of the king's records, to the great injury of the royal revenues and rights. 5. The alienation of the crown lands, by which the king's revenue had been rendered insufficient for the defence of the realm.

A report was transmitted, apparently about the same time, to Cromwell, which, even allowing for all deduction from the weight of its statements on account of the party spirit so evidently pervading it, presents a most frightful picture of the general state of the kingdom. To Kildare, and the "allegiance" borne towards him, almost superseding the loyalty due to the crown itself,§ the writers attribute most of the wrongs and enormities of which they complain. Among other instances adduced of the daring spirit of the Irish, the report mentions, that Edmund Oge O'Brian, who had never ceased for nearly a year to make active war upon the Englishrie, had, within the last five weeks, made forcible entry, by night, into the castle of Dublin, and carried away from thence prisoners and plunder;—an act which had filled the citizens of Dublin with such dismay, that they nightly kept watch in the fear of a repetition of his visit.

The occupation by the Scots of a great part of Ulster, thereby encroaching on the king's inheritance, is another of the evils complained of by the authors of this report; and, they add, so fast was the number of these intruders increasing, that fears were entertained, lest, with the aid of the rebellious Irish, they would succeed in dislodging the king from his seignory in that province. Complaints are also made of the increasing encroachments of the O'Brians, owing to a bridge lately built by them over the Shannon, whereby they had already "in a manner subdued all the English thereto joining, and specially the country of Limerick." It is added, that, "unless that bridge be in haste

* Ware's *Annals*. Cox. † Instructions to Cromwell, *S. P.* LIX.

‡ Instructions to John Alen, *S. P.* LXIII.

§ The sort of fascination, made up of dread and affection, by which all classes were held in thrall by Kildare, is thus described in this report:—"If the said counsaile were present here, I would not faile to say before them, in tyme and place, if the cass so required, that they be partely corrupted with affection toward the erle of Kildare, and partely in soche dreade of him, that either they will not or dare not do any thing that should be displeasante to him."—*State Papers*, LXIV.

laid prostrate," the O'Brians may be expected, before long, to encroach still farther upon the territory of the English.

In reference to the opinions of such persons as set but slight value on the possession of Ireland, and spoke of the rudeness and want of civilization among the people, the report advances the following just and liberal remark:—"As to their surmise of the bruteness of the people, and the incivilitie of them; no doubt, if there were justice used among them, they would be found as civil, wise, politic, and active as any other nation."*

In another report on the state of Ireland,† drawn up subsequently, as it appears, to that just noticed, and addressed to the king himself, there occur some curious insights into the actual condition of the country. So powerful, it is stated, had the great Anglo-Irish lords now become, that in none of those shires where the earls of Kildare, Desmond, or Ossory "held dominion," could offences committed by the king's subjects be taken cognizance of, nor any measures adopted to seize the offenders, without permission from the lord to whom such seignory or palatinate belonged; so that, as the report expresses it, "your grace must make petition to every of the said earls, for leave to invade your own subjects." The earl of Desmond alone, and his kinsmen, possessed, for their share, the counties of Kerry, Cork, Limerick, and Waterford; from none of which shires did the king derive "a single groat of yearly profit or revenues," nor in any one of them were his laws observed or executed; though, as the report adds, a period had been, when those same shires "were as obedient to his laws as Middlesex is now."

Of the counties of Kilkenny and Tipperary, which the earl of Ossory had under his dominion, much the same account is given, with the addition, that the wretched people of those shires were harassed and oppressed by exactions of coyne and livery; and the county of Wexford, which was held, with similar rights and royalties, by the earl of Shrewsbury, lay, in the same manner, out of the reach of the king's laws, and was equally unproductive to the royal revenue.

Among other charges brought in this report against the three great Anglo-Irish earls, it is stated that, availing themselves of the old Irish custom, called cosbery, which entitled the chief lord, or dynast, to exact from his tenants provisions and lodging for himself and his retinue, they used "to come, with a great multitude of people, to monasteries and gentlemen's houses, and there continue two days and two nights, taking meat and drink at their pleasure;" while, at the same time, their horses and servants were quartered upon the poor farmers of the neighbourhood, and nothing paid for their entertainment. In this manner, it is added, these lords were accustomed to pass more than half the year, making use of other people's houses, and sparing their own.

The conclusion drawn by the framers of this curious document, from the various facts they had collected, is that though popular opinion attributes to the "wild Irish lords and captains the destruction of the land of Ireland, it is not they only, but the treason, rebellion, extortion, and wilful war of the aforesaid earls and other English lords," that are to be held answerable for all this ruin; and, in counselling the king as to the means to be adopted for the cure of these evils, they say, pointedly, "When your grace has reformed your earls, English lords, and others your subjects, then proceed to the reformation of your Irish rebels."

At the time of the framing of this report, Kildare's son, the young lord Thomas, had just entered on his office of vice-deputy; and a strong anxiety is expressed by the writers, that some deputy of English birth, and appointed for life, or, at least, for a term of years, should be sent to Ireland without delay, as the deputy left by Kildare is "taken to be young and wilful, and mostly, to this time, ordered by light counsel."

However amiable may have been the natural qualities of this young lord,—and he is represented, in general, as brave, open, and generous,—the scenes of violence among which he had been brought up, and the examples of ambition, family pride, and uncontrolled self-will, which his own ill-fated race supplied, formed but an ominous preparation for the grave duties now so rashly assigned to him. In addition to the perils arising from his own utter inexperience, he was surrounded by watchful enemies, full of hatred to him and his race; and the opportunity which alone they wanted for the indulgence of this rancorous feeling, their ingenuity was, of course, not slow in creating. A report was spread by them that the earl of Kildare had been beheaded in the Tower, and that lord Thomas and all his uncles were menaced with the same fate.‡ Too readily trusting to this rumour, the young lord, at the head of a guard of 140 armed horsemen, rode through the city of Dublin to Dame's Gate, and, crossing the river, proceeded to St.

* State Papers, LXIV.
† Articles and Instructions to our Soveraine Lord the King for his Lande of Ireland, &c. P. LXIX.
‡ Stanihurst, ap Holinshed.

Mary's Abbey, where the council, according to appointment, waited his coming. There, surrounded by armed followers, who had crowded with him into the council chamber, the youth solemnly renounced his allegiance to the English monarch, and proceeded to deliver up the sword and robes of state.

In vain did Cromer, the lord chancellor, who had been indebted to Kildare for his promotion to that dignity, implore of him, with tears, to revoke his purpose, and still retain the sword of state. The young Geraldine stood unmoved; while, just at that moment, there burst forth from the midst of his excited followers, the voice of an Irish bard, or rhymer, chanting the praises of the "silken lord,"—for so lord Thomas, from the richness of his caparisons, was styled,—and calling passionately upon him to revenge his father's death. From that moment, all farther parley was at an end; the youth cast from him the sword of state, and, rushing forth at the head of his wild followers, entered upon that rash and ill-concerted struggle, which ended in the ruin of himself and of almost the whole of his kindred.*

The first step taken by the council was to send orders to the mayor to arrest lord Thomas; but, as the city had been lately much depopulated by a plague then raging in town and country, the public authorities feared to venture upon such a step; and archbishop Allen, chief baron Finglas, and one or two other personages, obnoxious to the Geraldines, retired for safety to the castle. In this almost defenceless state of Dublin, the O'Tooles and other mountain septs of Wicklow, taking advantage of the weakness of the inhabitants, overran and despoiled the rich territory of Fingal. But this aggression was not left wholly unresisted; for, on seeing the granary of their city thus insolently plundered, such of the inhabitants as were able to bear arms sallied out to intercept the prey. Being overpowered, however, with numbers, they were driven back, and many of their small force slain.†

Though, from the city, thus weakened by pestilence and the sword, no effective effort was to be expected, the castle, under the command of its constable, sir John White, gave promise of a lengthened resistance; and as the possession of such a post was an object of importance to Fitz Gerald, he announced to the citizens, now panic-struck with their late defeat, that if they would permit him to enter the town and lay siege to the castle, both themselves and their properties should be left uninjured. This proposal was referred by the citizens to the constable, who, after some conferences with them, agreed that, in consideration of their helpless condition, the demand should be complied with; only stipulating that he should first be supplied with men and provisions sufficient to enable him to stand a siege.‡

It may well be conceived that, by all those personages who had taken refuge, together with the archbishop, in the castle, the prospect of a siege which might end in delivering them up to the rebels was viewed with horror and dismay; and Allen,§ who, more than any, had reason to dread the hate of the Geraldines, having resolved to make his escape to England, embarked at night on board a vessel which was then lying near Dame's Gate. But, whether through accident or design, the ship was stranded near Clontarf, and the unfortunate archbishop, falling into the hands of the rebels at a small village called Artane, whither he had fled for shelter, was there in the most brutal manner put to death;—lord Thomas himself standing by, during the murder, and in so far authorizing the base and cold-blooded crime. There were likewise present, it appears, his two uncles, sir John and Oliver Fitz Gerald.

Leaving a part of his force to lay siege to the castle, the young lord hastened with the main body of his numerous followers to invade the country of the earl of Ossory. But this active and watchful officer had already, in anticipation of his movement, occupied, with a large force suddenly raised, the counties of Catherlough and Kildare; and the taking by storm, after a siege of five days, an old manor house on the Slaney, belonging to the Ormond family, was the sole result of this first trial of the young Geraldine's strength. With the hope of prevailing upon Ossory to join his standard, he despatched messengers to that powerful lord, offering to divide with him equally the kingdom of Ireland, if he would withdraw his allegiance from the king. To this proposition Ossory answered, that, "even were his country all laid waste, his castles won or prostrate, and himself an exile, he would yet to the last persevere in duty to his king."‖

A material change had mean while taken place in the state of affairs in Dublin. Owing to an alleged infraction of faith on the part of the force admitted to lay siege to

* Stanihurst, ap. Holinshed. † Stanihurst. ‡ Ibid.

§ This prelate was the compiler of that venerable volume, the *Black Book of Christ-Church*, and also of the *Repertorium Viride*, which is likewise still extant.

‖ Ossory to W. Cowley, *S. P.* XCIII.

the castle, that permission was suddenly withdrawn by the citizens; their gates were immediately closed upon the rebels, and almost all found within the walls were arrested as traitors.*

When the news of this unprosperous turn of affairs reached lord Thomas, he was about to proceed, assisted by the forces of O'Connor, O'Moore, and other chiefs, to invade the county of Kilkenny; while the earl of Desmond, with similar hostile views, was threatening an irruption into Tipperary. When lord Thomas, therefore, anxious to recover the ground he had lost in Dublin, and, above all, to obtain possession of the ordnance of the castle†, proposed a truce for a short time, to Ossory, that lord, whose immediate object was to oppose his entire force to the inroad of Desmond, readily assented to the arrangement. This point having been gained, Fitz Gerald directed his march to Dublin. But so fully prepared did he find the inhabitants for resistance,—their spirits having been cheered by an encouraging message from the king,—that both in an assault made by him on the castle from Ship Street, and also an attempt to enter the city by Newgate, he was entirely foiled by the skill and bravery of the townsmen.

Among his army were a number of inhabitants of the Pale, on whom, as compulsory followers of his standard, the citizens counted as secretly friends to their cause. In this cheering hope they were farther confirmed, on finding that the arrows shot over the walls were most of them without heads, and that some even conveyed letters giving information of the besiegers' designs. These encouraging circumstances led them to resolve upon a sally; and, having given out from the walls that new succours had arrived from England, they rushed forth, through fire and flame, on the ranks of the enemy, who, judging from this boldness that the rumoured re-enforcements had actually arrived, immediately fled, leaving one hundred of their galloglasses slain, and most of their cannon in the hands of the citizens. Fitz Gerald himself lay hid all night at the Friary in Francis Street,‡ and from thence escaped, at break of day, to his camp.

In addition to this serious check, he also learned that the earl of Ossory was overrunning, with a large force, the counties of Catherlough and Kildare, and forcibly dislodging from their lands and homes the adherents of the Geraldines in that quarter. He was therefore readily disposed to enter into a truce with the citizens, and the following were the terms proposed by him:—1. That they should release such of his men as they had taken prisoners. 2. That the city should pay him 1000*l.* in money, and 500*l.* in wares. 3. That they should furnish him with ammunition and artillery. 4. That they should procure the king's pardon both for him and his followers, and moreover obtain for him the deputation of the government of Ireland for life.§

To the first of these propositions—which, considering the defeat the noble negotiator had just sustained, was not a little unconscionable—the citizens answered, that, if he would restore to them their children, they would most readily give him back his men. This natural retort had reference to an outrage committed by Fitz Gerald, in his late march upon Dublin, when, meeting on his way, as he approached the town, a number of children belonging to the better class of citizens, who had been removed, in consequence of the plague, into the country, he took them all prisoners, and, as appears from this answer, still continued to keep them confined.

To the second and third articles it was significantly answered, that, so impoverished were they by his rebellions, they could spare neither money nor wares; and that if he purposed, as he said, to return to his allegiance, he would have no need of ammunition or artillery. They also added, that, instead of artillery to be employed against his prince, he ought rather to have asked for parchment whereon to engross his own pardon.‖

Such is the account, as transmitted from historian to historian, of the leading particulars of this memorable siege, as well as of the parley that followed;—the latter terminating, we are told, in the acceptance of the terms of the citizens by lord Thomas. There are good grounds, however, for distrusting most of these generally received details; and all we can learn from official records is, that the armistice was to last for six days; that the citizens, in the event of their failing to obtain for Fitz Gerald the king's pardon, and the office of deputy for his life, were, on a certain day, to deliver up to him the city; and that three of the most eminent of their body should be given as hostages for the performance of this agreement.¶

* Stanihurst.

† "The rebell hath in effecte consumed all his shoot; and, except he wynneth the castell of Dublin, he is destitute of shoote, which is a gret cumforte and advantage for the kinge's army."—J. Alen to Cromwell, *S. P.* LXXVII.

‡ Stanihurst. Harris, *Hist. of Dublin.* § Stanihurst. ‖ Ibid.

¶ State Papers, LXXVIII.

It was about this time that the sentence of excommunication, in its most vengeful and tremendous form, was issued against lord Thomas, and his uncles John and Oliver, for the cruel murder of Allen, archbishop of Dublin.* A copy of this tremendous curse was transmitted, we are told, to the lieutenant of the Tower, for the cruel purpose of being shown to Kildare, who was then confined there a prisoner. But the wretched earl was probably spared the infliction of this pang; as it appears that, on receiving the first intelligence of his son's rebellion, he was so struck to the heart with the news, being already afflicted with palsy, that his death followed soon after.

The new lord deputy, sir William Skeffington, who landed at Dublin soon after the truce concluded with lord Thomas, was in so infirm a state of health on his arrival, as to be unable, for some time, to take the field; and not only himself, but almost the whole of his army and officers, lay, for a considerable time, shut up and inactive, within the walls of Dublin and Drogheda.† Mean while, there raged throughout the whole kingdom a confused medley of petty warfare, in which, from the consanguinity of the Geraldine families with both of the rival races, the rebel camp was filled with a motley array of English and Irish; while, on the royal side, the greater number of the northern chieftains had ranged themselves under the flag of loyalty and the English.

Presuming upon Skeffington's inactivity, the "traitor," as Fitz Gerald was commonly styled, accompanied by a force of not more than 100 horsemen and about 300 kerns and galloglasses, traverse daringly the territories of the Pale,—now presenting himself before Trim, from whence, having burned down a great part of the town, he carried away numbers of cattle; now laying siege to Dunboyne, within but a few miles of Dublin, and, after a defence prolonged for some days by the inhabitants, who had in vain applied to head-quarters for succour, entirely burning and destroying the town. This outrage, committed within a few miles of the seat of government, the lord deputy suffered to pass without any punishment, and even entered into a truce with the young rebel,—"which, as meseemeth," adds a contemporary writer, "was nothing honourable."

Small and precarious as were his resources, Fitz Gerald's cause now assumed an appearance of success, which, though dependent for its chance of continuance on the mere pleasure of the government, was sufficiently specious to deceive himself and all the more sanguine of his followers. Presuming on this confident feeling, he declared openly his intention to burn down Trim, Athboy, the Howan, Naas, and other corporate towns, lest the English should plant garrisons or establish store-houses for provisions in those places. With the same view, and by the advice of his chief ally, O'Moore, he threatened to raze to the ground his own garrisons in Kildare, lest, as he said, "Englishmen should have any profit of them."‡

We have already seen, in the course of this reign, an earl of Desmond applying for aid to foreign powers;§ and now, again, in lord Thomas Fitz Gerald, we find another heir of a great Anglo-Irish family turning his eyes to foreign shores with a like hostile feeling towards England. He had already, with this view, appointed the official of Meath, who was one of the divines that formed his council, to embark at Sligo, in a Spanish ship, for Spain, and thence proceed to Rome; taking along with him a number of old muniments and precedents, for the purpose of proving that the English king held Ireland of the see of Rome. He was also instructed to request of the emperor and the bishop of Rome to assist lord Thomas in defence of the faith against the king of England; in return for which he would solemnly pledge himself to hold of those powers the realm of Ireland, and to pay tribute for it yearly.‖

While the hopes of Fitz Gerald's adherents were kept alive by this prospect of foreign aid, his own garrisons at Maynooth, Portlester, Rathangan, Lea, and other places,

* State Papers, LXXXI. The following extract will give some notion of the awful violence of this curse:—"We invocate, and call in vengeance against the said Thomas, and every of the persons aforesaid, the celestial place of heaven, with all the multitude of the angels, that they be accursed before them, and in their sight, as spirits condemned; and the devil to stand and be, in all their doings, on their right hand; and all their acts to be sinful, and not acceptable before God, . . . that God Almighty may rain upon them the flames of fire and sulphur to their eternal vengeance; and that they may clothe themselves with the maledictions and high curse, as they daily clothe themselves with their garments."

† J. Alen to Crumwell, *S. P.* LXXXII. ‡ Ibid.

§ Earl James, the eleventh earl, who twice engaged in a treaty with foreign powers against Henry VIII.,—in 1523 with the king of France, and in 1528 with the emperor. His uncle Thomas, the twelfth earl, who succeeded him, at an advanced age, in the year 1539, was strongly suspected of also holding a treasonous intercourse with the emperor. "This instant day," says the writer of a letter among the State Papers, "report is made by the viker of Dongarvan, that themprour hath sent certain letters unto theris of Desmound, by the same chapleyn or embassadour, that was sent unto James, the late erle; and the common brayt is that his practice is to wyn the Geraltynes and the Breenes, and that themprour entendeth shortly to send an army to invade the citees and townes by the see coostes of this land."—Wise to Crumwell, *S. P.* LXXIV.

‖ J. Alen to Crumwell, *S. P.* LXXXII.

afforded him the means, if properly managed, of maintaining his ground till such aid from abroad should arrive; and all his substance, wealth, and most of his ordnance, had been removed by him into the castle of Lea. He counted but few of the great chiefs among his supporters; and even of these there were some now threatening to withdraw their aid, while all the chief Irish lords of the north, with the exception only of O'Neill, had written letters to the lord deputy, proffering their allegiance.* Even that restless sept, the O'Tooles of Wicklow, who, according to some accounts, had fought against the citizens during the late siege of Dublin, were now ranged on the loyal side. Among those, too, really opposed to lord Thomas, were a great number that had not yet openly declared themselves, through a fear that his rebellion would be ultimately pardoned, as had been those of his father, grandfather, and others of his ancestors, and that all who had opposed him would be left helplessly exposed to his vengeance.†

In this state of the public mind, sir William Skeffington, who was now sufficiently recovered in health to take the field at the head of his army, laid siege to the castle of Maynooth, which Fitz Gerald had just put into a state of defence. So strongly, indeed, had he fortified it, both with men and ordnance, that, if we may credit sir William's boastful account of the siege, nothing equal to it in strength had been seen in Ireland since the English first held dominion in the land.‡ A. D. 1535.

In the full hope that this powerful castle would, if attacked, be able to hold out until his return, lord Thomas had hastened to inspect the state of his five other strongholds, Rathangan, Catherlough, Portlester, Lea, and Athy; and then proceeded, with the view of collecting fresh partisans, into Connaught. He had been led, however, to count too confidently, as well upon the strength of the fortress of Maynooth, as on the continued delay and inaction of the lord deputy, who, now conscious that loss of character, as well as of time, was to be retrieved by him, left Dublin on the 13th of March, and on the following day commenced the siege of Maynooth.§

After repeated attacks, day and night, during the space of nine days, a breach was at last opened into the base-court of the castle, through which, on the following day, after a grand assault, the besiegers entered, slaying about sixty of the ward of the castle, and losing but a yeoman of the king's guard, together with six others killed in the assault.‖ This important position having been thus gained, the castle itself, after a short resistance, surrendered; there being then within its walls the dean of Kildare, the captain of the garrison, Christopher Paris, together with Donagh O'Dogan, master of the ordnance, sir Simon Walsh, priest, and Nicholas Wafer, one of those servants of the Earl of Kildare who waylaid and murdered archbishop Alen. These, with some archers and gunners, amounting to the number of about thirty-seven, were all taken prisoners, and their lives spared until the lord deputy and his council should have inquired into and pronounced judgment upon their offences.¶

On the Thursday following, the prisoners were examined, and their several depositions taken; and in the afternoon of the same day, being arraigned before the provost marshal and the captains, they were, on their own confession, condemned to die. Twenty-five of their number were beheaded in front of the castle, while one was hanged; and the heads of all the chief persons were immediately placed on the castle turrets. Among other intelligence obtained from the prisoners, it was deposed by a priest, not named, in whom Fitz Gerald placed much confidence, that the emperor had promised to send him 10,000 men by the first day of May, and that the Scottish monarch had also engaged to furnish the rebels with aid.**

In the mean time, lord Thomas, having, with the help of his relative, O'Connor, succeeded in collecting a considerable army in Connaught, was hastening with his force to the relief of Maynooth, when the gloomy news of the fate of that garrison reached him, and spreading rapidly from thence to his partisans, throughout the kingdom, struck such a damp at once into the spirit of his cause, as it never after entirely recovered. The

* "Meny letters have bene sent from the Irisshe men to my lord deputie of ther good myndes toward the kynge's grace; notwithstanding the borderers, as Oconer, Oraillie, and other, have much robbed the countrie seth oure landying. There is not oon of them but that will take his advantage, when he seeth his time, albeit now they withdrawe them selfes from the traytor."—Brabazon to Crumwell, *S. P.* LXXXIII.

† J. Alen to Crumwell, *S. P.* LXXXII.

‡ The Lord Deputy and Council of Ireland to Henry VIII., *S. P.* LXXXVII.

§ "Maynooth was accounted," says Lodge, "for the abundance of its furniture, one of the richest houses under the crown of England."

‖ By all our historians, the surrender of Maynooth to sir William Skeffington is attributed to the treachery of the governor of the castle, Christopher Paris. But neither for this charge, nor for any of the anecdotes grafted upon it, does there appear to be any foundation in our official records. Of this, indeed, as well as of many other such tales foisted into our history, the source may obviously be traced to the dull inventions of Stanihurst.

¶ State Papers, LXXXVII.

** Ibid.

large tumultuary force he had collected now daily dwindled away; till at length, when compelled to seek for refuge in O'Brian's country, a small train of gentlemen, yeomen, and priests, to the number of about sixteen, formed the whole of his escort. His first intention had been to sail from thence to Spain, to solicit assistance from the emperor. But this plan he afterwards abandoned; and, sending as his envoys to the imperial court, sir James de la Hyde and a priest named Walsh, resolved to await the chance of events; his hope being that he should find himself able, with the aid of foreign or Scottish auxiliaries, to take the field in the ensuing midsummer; when, by a combined movement, in which O'Connor, O'Neill, and Manus O'Donnell were expected to join, the English Pale was to be invaded.*

Of all these schemes, still as they arose, full information was conveyed to the lord deputy and council by Neill Connelagh, Mac Guire, the lord O'Donnell, Claneboy, and other Ulster chiefs enlisted in the English interests, and all as ready to assist in quelling their rebellious countrymen in the field as they had been to denounce them in the council. On this occasion, too,—as on all others where active and honest zeal was called for,—the loyal services of the earl of Ossory and his son, the lord treasurer, were promptly and effectively forthcoming. Already had they managed to detach from the league now formed among the captains, one of the most daring and active of their number, O'Moore, of Ley;—hoping through his means to hold in check some of the less friendly of the chiefs, and more especially Fitz Gerald's ally and relative, O'Connor.

Among the measures suggested by Ossory to the government, it was strongly recommended by him that there should be a resumption of all grants of the king's revenues and customs, more particularly of those to privileged places; and likewise that the act called, in general Poynings' Law, should, during the parliament about to assemble, be suspended.†

Had the powers of the state been now wielded with even a moderate degree of vigour and skill, the young Geraldine's rebellion, instead of being suffered to protract its struggle for more than a year, might have been crushed in a few weeks after its first outbreak. But, besides the inaction of the lord deputy himself, owing to his continued state of ill-health, he also embarrassed frequently, by his interference, the measures and counsels of those who acted for him; and, had we no other clew to his character than his own official letters, the inflated pomp of their tone, compared with the meagerness of the results they have to communicate, would mark sufficiently the order of minds to which he belonged.‡

To meet the dangers that menaced the kingdom, there had been, at an early period of his deputyship, a general call for the appointment of a marshal of the army; and, in the spring of this year, sir John Saintclow had been appointed to that office. He does not appear, however, to have taken much part in the warfare that followed; the chief services in which were performed by the earl of Ossory and his son, lord James, as we find duly acknowledged in the grant made to them, two years after, when the ancient title of their family, Ormond, was restored.

The address of Ossory, in drawing away from the rebel standard the brave and powerful chief, O'Moore, had deprived the Geraldines of their best prop and hope. The same experiment was tried in other quarters, and with no less success;—the prevalence of factions among the Irish, in the very interior of their homes and families, rendering such quick changes of party frequent and familiar. In this very rebellion, the instances of different members of the same family fighting on opposite sides, were by no means uncommon. Thus, while the great O'Brian, as he was styled, espoused warmly the cause of lord Thomas, his eldest son, joining the followers of the earl of Ossory, took the field against his own father and all his kindred. In the same manner, Cahir O'Connor, the brother of the chief who adhered longest to the cause of Fitz Gerald, agreed to fight during this war on the side of the English, on condition that he should have, "at the king's wages," 12 horsemen and 160 kern.§

One farther instance may here be added, as well of the inveteracy of private dissension among the people, as of the fatal advantage taken of it by their rulers. Some movements in Munster, at the beginning of this year, having shown a disposition, on the part of the Mac Carthys and Geraldines, to take up arms in favour of lord Thomas, the earl of

* Skeffington to King Henry VIII., *S. P.* XCII.

† "Wherfor it shulde be best, in my minde, that the acte that restrayneth to holde parliament without certyficat into Englande, be put in suspence during this parliament."—Ossory to W. Cowley, *S. P.* XCIII.

‡ "The deputie followith the counsail of suche as have nether strength, activitie, practise, or yit good will to further the kinges most necessary affaires."—*Ibid.*

§ Aylmer and Alen to Cromwell, *S. P.* XCVIII.

Ossory hastened to the scene of this gathering revolt, and going among the Geraldines, "sowed such strife between them," to use his own language, "that they continued long after full of war and debate, the one destroying the other."*

While thus, in the south and the west, internal division and treachery were busily sapping the strength of Fitz Gerald's friends, all the great captains of the north, with but one or two exceptions, took their stand firmly on the side of the government; and the lord deputy, in announcing to the king his intention speedily to march into O'Connor's country, mentions, as the chiefs to whose services he looks forward, O'Donnell, Mac Guire, Neill Connelagh, O'Reilly, Neill Mor, Hugh Roe, Mac Mahon, the O'Hanlons, and several others.† Such being the immense superiority on the side of the government it was not to be expected that the young "traitor" with his few and precarious allies, should be able to maintain any longer the struggle. It was only by the connivance, indeed, of some of those opposed to him, that he had been enabled to continue his resistance, or escape falling into the hands of the English. In the course of an incursion, under the lord treasurer, into Offaley, in which he was attended by the leading gentry of Kildare, as well as by O'Moore of Ley, this chief, while skirmishing with the rebels, forbore from killing any of lord Thomas's troops, and aimed at those only belonging to his brother chieftain and rival, O'Connor. Many of the rebels, also, on being made prisoners, met in the royal ranks with sympathizing Geraldines, by whom they were assisted to escape; and lord Thomas himself, in the course of these skirmishes, fell, more than once into the hands of the king's troops, and was again let go by them.‡

A war thus collusively carried on was not likely very soon to terminate. But a far more prompt and decisive policy was now about to be adopted; and the arrival in Ireland of lord Leonard Gray, an officer of high military character, was viewed as the prelude to his succeeding Skeffington in the office of lord deputy.

However little there may have been of actual fighting between the two parties, the work of ravage and devastation, which has formed, at all times, a main branch of Irish warfare, was maintained, by both, with the usual ruinous efficiency; and a paper, drawn up after a short absence from Ireland, by chief justice Aylmer, and the master of the rolls, John Alen, expresses their surprise at the frightful change they found in the condition of the country; no less than six of the eight baronies that formed the county of Kildare having been burnt and depopulated, while part of Meath had undergone the same doom; and, but for the lord treasurer, who lay at Naas, with a portion of the army, the remainder of Kildare and the county of Dublin would have been laid waste to the city gates.§ When, together with all this, it is taken into account that the plague was then raging through the country, the picture of the misery that must have every where prevailed is rendered complete.

Among other ruins that marked the course of the spirit of havoc then abroad, were the prostrate walls of the noble castle of Powerscourt, erected by the late earl of Kildare.‖

No time was lost on the arrival of lord Leonard, in preparing a force for the invasion of Offaley, in which district, and the continued alliance of its hardy chief, now lay Fitz Gerald's sole hope. Provided with victuals for twenty-one days, the army mustered, as had been appointed, at Naas; and was now but waiting for the lord deputy to place himself at its head. But sir William Skeffington was still lying ill and helpless, at Maynooth; where, to add to the dreariness of his position, all the country around the castle had been laid desolate to the very gates. Still, unwilling that any but himself should enjoy the credit of leading the enterprise, he continued to procrastinate, from day to day, keeping lord Leonard's force, as well as his own, consuming idly in the field their stock of provisions; while lord James Butler also, at the head of 120 horsemen and 500 foot, and the Irish allies, O'Moore and Cahir O'Connor, were all, in like manner, with their respective forces, kept waiting the lord deputy's recovery.¶

Among other important projects, delayed or frustrated by the same cause, are men-

* Ossory to W. Cowley, *S. P.* XCIII. Lord Leonard Gray, in one of his letters, speaks even more bitterly of the contentious spirit of this Anglo-Irish sept:—"As for neues," he says, "we have none worthie writing synes the date of our other letters; but the bastarde Geraldynes, by the permission of God, be killing one another."—Gray and Brabazon to Crumwell, *S. P.* CLXVIII.

† Skeffington to Henry VIII., S. P. XCVII.

‡ Aylmer and Alen to Crumwell, S. P. XCVIII. § Ibid.

‖ "The Tholes entered by tradyment into Powers Courte, oon of the fairist garrysons in this countrie (the buylding wherof cost the oolde erle of Kildare and the inhabitauntis of the countie of Dublin 4 or 5 000 markis, for the defence of the said Tholes and the Birnes,) and prostrated the same down to the grounde."—*Ibid.*

¶ Ibid.

tioned the expedition for the destruction of O'Brian's bridge,—an object considered to be of great importance,—the taking of the town of Dungarvan, and the subjection or reformation of the O'Brians and Geraldines of Munster.*

Finding himself, at length, sufficiently recovered to be able to venture on the expedition, Skeffingham marched his army to Offaley, and entered the borders of that country; whereupon, O'Connor, to whom there remained now no other alternative than either to submit, or to be utterly ruined, came in and surrendered himself to the lord deputy. Deprived thus of his only efficient ally, lord Thomas saw that all farther struggle was hopeless. He therefore, in a letter to lord Leonard, which shows of what weak materials such firebrands may be composed, entreated that lord to be his intercessor with the king, and to obtain for him "his pardon, his life, and landa."† He was accordingly admitted to a parley, and confessing humbly his heinous offences towards the king, gave himself up into the hands of lord Leonard and the council, to be disposed of according to the royal pleasure. In communicating these terms to the king, the council added, from themselves, an humble prayer, that, in consideration of "the words of comfort spoken to lord Thomas, to allure him to yield himself up," the royal clemency might be extended towards him, "more especially as regarded his life.‡"

In the month of August, this year, the ill-fated young lord was sent prisoner to England; and such was the importance attached to the security of his person, that lord Leonard Gray was specially appointed to conduct him to England and deliver him safe into the hands of the king. But, however welcome to offended majesty was such a victim, the hopes of mercy held out to Fitz Gerald not only damped, but considerably embarrassed, the royal triumph.§ His five uncles, too, though all obnoxious, and some of them known to have been as deeply involved in the rebellion as himself, were still left at large. About the beginning, however, of the following year, these five brethren surrendered themselves to the lord Gray, and were by him sent prisoners to England, where, together with their ill-fated nephew, to whom hopes of pardon had been so delusively held out, they were all executed at Tyburn.

Notwithstanding this sweeping vengeance of the law, there were still left in Ireland direct representatives of the house of Kildare; for the late earl's second wife, lady Elizabeth Gray, the daughter of the marquis of Dorset, had borne him two sons, the eldest of whom, Gerald, was, at the time of lord Thomas's death, about twelve or thirteen years of age. He was then in O'Brian's country, under the care of James de la Hyde; while the second son, Edward, had been conveyed, in some mysterious manner, to his mother, the countess of Kildare, then at Beaumanoir, in Leicestershire.‖ As Gerald, the elder brother, had been declared publicly an enemy, those interested in his safety, whether as relatives or partisans, had him removed from place to place as security and secrecy required; and, after remaining some time among the Geraldines, in O'Brian's country, he was from thence secretly conveyed to his aunt, lady Eleanor, the widow of the late chief of South Munster, Mac Carthy Reagh, and then residing in that territory.

The destruction of O'Brian's bridge, an object considered, as we have seen, to be of great importance, and which had been more than once unsuccessfully attempted, was at this time effected by a force under the joint command of the lord deputy, the earl of Ossory, and his son, lord James Butler. The consequence attached by the higher authorities to this enterprise may be judged not only from the rank of the commanders conducting it, but also from the complaints made by Butler, in his account of the expedition, that neither the baron of Delvin nor the baron of Slane was present, and that few of the English Pale had lent their aid. The treachery of the Irish, however, to each other,—that unfailing resource of their enemies,—stood instead of more honourable means; and the chief's son, Donough O'Brian, was the ready traitor in this emergency, both to his family's and his country's interests.¶ The possession of the castle of Carrigogunnel—an ancient place of great strength, in the neighbourhood of Limerick, which had been in the hands of one or other of the O'Brians for more than 200 years—was the prime object of Donough's ambition; and lord Leonard Gray, now lord deputy, having agreed to deliver this castle into his custody, he, in return, lent his aid in the present aggression on his

* Ossory to W. Cowley, State Papers, C.

† Lord Thomas Fitz Gerald to Lord Leonard Gray, State Papers, CI.

‡ The Council of Ireland to King Henry VIII., State Papers, CIII.

§ "The doying whorof the (apprehension of Thomas Fitz Gerald) albeit We accept it thankfully, yet, if he had been apprehended after such sorte as was convenable to his deservynges, the same had been moche more thankfull and better to our contentacion."—King Henry VIII. to Skeffyngton, State Papers, CVI.

‖ Countess of Kildare to Crumwell, State Papers, CXXXVII.

¶ Donough O'Brian had married Hellen, youngest daughter of Piers, earl of Ormond.

father's territory. Pointing out a by-road to the bridge, entirely unknown before to the English, he thus saved them the delay and difficulty of carrying their ordnance across the river, and enabled them more readily to bring all their force to the attack.*

This bridge was protected, at each end, by a castle of "hewn marble,"—both castles built in the water, at some distance from the land, and both well defended by gunners, galloglasses, and horsemen. The lord deputy began by attacking the larger of these two garrisons; but finding that his ordnance took no effect, he caused that part of the river between the land and the castle to be filled up with fagots or fascines; and gaining thus a footing for his scaling-ladders, found himself enabled to take possession of both the castles and the bridge, and with the loss of only two gunners in the assault. The whole of the structure was then broken down and destroyed; and of such moment to the peace of the Pale was this feat considered, that we find the lord deputy, a few months after, referring to the destruction of O'Brian's bridge, as a service worthy of being classed along with that other great act of his administration, the seizure of Fitz Gerald and his five uncles.†

About the beginning of the month of February, this year, a rumour had reached Ireland that lord Thomas and his five kinsmen were about to return thither immediately. So often had former earls of Kildare been known to triumph over their enemies, and such was the spell the Irish connected with the name of Fitz Gerald, that it was not till the news arrived of the frightful executions at Tyburn, which took place, as already has been mentioned, on the third of this month, that the hope was surrendered by them, of seeing their favourites return safe and triumphant. It must have aggravated, too, the bitterness of their feeling, did they know that the ill-fated young lord himself was not allowed, during his confinement, the commonest necessaries of life; but "bare-footed and bare-legged," as a melancholy letter of his own describes his condition, was indebted to the charity of his fellow-prisoners for the few tattered garments that covered him.‡ A. D. 1536.

One of the principal events of this year was the expedition, or "hosting," of the lord deputy into Offaley, and his expulsion from thence of Brian O'Connor. This powerful chief, though one of the most active of Fitz Gerald's supporters, had, on his submission at the close of the rebellion, been suffered to remain in possession of his territory. As he still, however, according to English authorities, continued to violate every pledge of peace he had given, the lord deputy prepared to invade his country. Attended by the barons of Delvin and Slane, and the lord Killeen, who had all joined him with their respective forces at Rathwere, he marched from thence through the territories of O'Mulmoy, O'Mulloghlin, and Mac Geoghegan, compelling these captains to abandon the cause of O'Connor, and even to join with the ranks of the invaders against him. Entering on the borders of Offaley, they took by storm the castle of Brakland, and delivered it into the hands of the chief's brother, Cahir O'Connor, who, following the unnatural example of Donough O'Brian and others, had leagued himself with his family's enemies.§ A. D. 1537.

From thence, under the guidance of lord Delvin, they penetrated into a part of O'Connor's country, where, as the council state in their despatch, "no English host had ever been known to enter."‖ Here, laying siege to the castle of Dengen, which the chief himself had erected in the middle of a large bog, they, notwithstanding the earnest entreaties of Cahir O'Connor, demolished the castle to the ground, leaving but a small angle of it standing;—"to the intent," as the lord deputy expresses himself, "that the Irish might see to what purpose the keeping of their castles served."¶ In the assault, eighteen of the defenders of the castle were slain, and their heads stuck up as memorials of the event; while Cahir was rewarded for his treachery by having the government of that territory committed to his care. With the view, too, of securing Offaley to the crown, it was proposed that either Cahir should be elsewhere provided for, and that district stocked with English inhabitants, or, if this were thought too costly an experiment, that he should be denizened, and created baron of Offaley, to hold that land of the king's gift, according

* The Council of Ireland to Cromwell, State Papers, CLXI.

† "I have seen men, for less interprises than the apprehension of Thomas Fitzgeralde, and, afterwards, the taking of all his fyve uncles and the braking of O'Brene's bridge, highly advanced."—Gray to Cromwell, State Papers.

‡ "I never had eny mony, sins I cam into pryson, but a nobull, nor I have had nothyr hosyn, dublet, nor shoys, nor shyrt, but on; nor eny othyr garment, but a syngyll fryse gowne, for a velve furryd wythe bowge, and so I have gone wolward, and barefote, and barelegyd, divirse times (whan ytt hath not ben very warme) and so I should have don styll, and now, but that pore prysoners, of their gentylnes, hath sumtyme geven me old hosyn, and shoys, and old shyrtes."—Lord Thomas Fitz Gerald to Rothe, State Papers, CLVIII.

§ Gray and Brabazon to Cromwell, State Papers, CLXIX.

‖ The Council of Ireland to Cromwell, State Papers, CLXX.

¶ Gray and Brabazon to Cromwell, State Papers, CLXIX.

to English laws and inheritance. This, they suggested, might have the effect of rendering him a good subject; and the reason assigned by them for this expectation is, like much that relates to Ireland, at once amusing and melancholy. Should he consent to accept of these favours, he must then, they think, be loyal, in his own defence; as "Irishmen would so hate him afterwards, that he would have but little comfort of them, and so must look to the king's subjects for protection against them."*

Events proved, however, that all this anxiety, as to the mode of disposing of him, had been most thanklessly thrown away. Before the year had quite expired, Brian O'Connor was again in possession of Offaley,†—while his brother Cahir, notwithstanding his compact with the English, again declared himself the king's enemy, and made common cause with Brian.‡ As this conduct of the O'Connors called for chastisement, the lord deputy again marched into their country; but the only result, as it appears, of his inroad, was the destruction of a large stock of corn found in the abbeys of Killeigh and Castle Goshil, and the carrying away from Killeigh of "a pair of organs," to be placed in the college of Maynooth, together with glass sufficient to glaze not only the windows of the church of that college, but most of the windows of the castle of Maynooth itself.§

For some months after this fruitless expedition, O'Connor, betaking himself to his bogs and woods, continued to baffle all the attempts made by the deputy to obtain possession of his person, or even to expel him from that territory. At length, driven to extremity, the hardy chief declared himself willing to enter into articles of submission; and a parley was held on the borders of the Pale, between him and lord Leonard, in the cautious forms of which, as concerted previously by the parties, we perceive how strong were the fears of treachery felt on both sides; while, in the privilege allowed to the chief of holding parley with vice-royalty, a sort of recognition is implied of that princely rank to which, in right of their ancient dynasties, the Irish chieftains laid claim.

O'Connor having declared that he "would in nowise come into the Pale to parle," it was agreed that the interview between him and the lord deputy should take place near a ford called Kenneford, on the borders of Offaley. There, in a large open field, the chief, as arranged by the articles, was to take his station, alone, leaving all his retinue at three miles' distance; while the lord deputy, with a certain number of troops,—not less than 350 horsemen, kern, and gunners,—was to come over the ford to meet him, leaving the remainder of his forces behind till the close of the conference. During the parley, watch was to be kept on a high hill, where also a trumpeter and four horsemen were to be stationed; and this trumpeter, on pain of death, was to sound an alarm if he saw any danger. Such were the forms (and, perhaps, not peculiar to this occasion) in which O'Connor made his submission, entreating, at the same time, that, through the intercession of the lord deputy, he might be permitted to hold Offaley of the crown.‖

Our last notice of the young lord Gerald, who was now the hope and rallying point of the rebel party, left him in Desmond under the care of his aunt, lady Eleanor, the widow of the late dynast of that territory. This lady was now about to be married to another great Irish chieftain, O'Donnell;¶—being partly moved, it was thought, to this step, by the hope of securing a friend and assertor of the rights of her outlawed nephew; and in the month of June, this year, we find her accompanied by the young Gerald and her own son, Mac Carthy Reagh, passing through Thomond on her way to O'Donnell's country. From Galway she was escorted to the end of her journey by Ulick de Burgh, —the same who, was some years after created earl of Clanricarde.

A. D. 1538.

This journey through so great a part of the kingdom, from the extreme south to the north, performed thus safely by a youth whose apprehension was of such importance to the king's party, showed very strongly the state of popular feeling; while the lord deputy's supposed connivance at these daring movements of the Geraldines, so much at variance with his public declarations, drew down those suspicions on his faith and loyality which led ultimately to his ruin. When arrived at O'Donnell's mansion, the

* The Council of Ireland to Crumwell, State Papers, CLXX.

† Sentleger, &c. to Crumwell, State Papers, CLXXXIX.—In reference to this success of O'Connor, the following severe reproof occurs in a letter from Crumwell to the lord deputy, dated from Oatlands:—"The expulsyon of hym (O'Connor) was taken very well, but the permyssion of him to have suche a scope to worke myschyff at his pleasure, as no dought he must nedes be remayneing in dyspayre of restytution, was neyther wysedom, nor yet good presydent. Redubbe yt, my lord, in the juste punyshement of his traytour's carkas, and lette his treason be a warning to youe, and to all that shalle have to doo for the kinges magestye ther, never to trust traytour after, but to use thaym, withoute tracte, after theyr demerytes."—State Papers CXCI.

‡ Brabazon to Crumwell, State Papers, CXCIII. § Gray to Crumwell, State Papers, CXCIV.

‖ "The Manner and Forme of the Parliament betwene Lord Leonarde Gray, the Kinges our Soveraign Lorde Hys Highness Deputie of Irelonde, and Bryan Ochonour."—*State Paper.*

¶ "The late erle of Kildare, his suster is gon to be married to Manus O'Donnell, with whom is gon yong Gerrot, Delahides, and others; which I like not. I was never in dispaire in Ireland till now."—Brabazon to Aylmer and Alen, S. P. CCXXIX.

party were met, as had previously been concerted, by the youth's near relative, O'Neill; a compact was sworn between the two chiefs to support the rights of young Gerald, and envoys were sent to solicit the aid of the Scottish monarch in their cause.*

Manus O'Donnell, now the husband of lady Eleanor, had lately succeeded, on the death of his father, to the lordship of Tyrconnel, having been inaugurated, according to a custom of high antiquity, upon the rock near Kilmacrenan church. Though bearing an hereditary grudge to O'Neill, he had now been induced, for the sake of young Gerald, to act in concert with that chief; and a like sacrifice of private feud to the general interests was made by O'Connor of Connaught,† who, though long at war with Manus O'Donnell for the possession of the castle of Sligo, now consented, with the view of facilitating the general league, to divide equally between O'Donnell and himself all the profits of this castle, as well as the rent likewise of Connaught. Among other arrangements made by them for Gerald's safety and honour, a guard of twenty-four horsemen, well armed and apparelled, was appointed to wait upon him at his pleasure.‡

In the month of July, this year, lord Leonard Gray proceeded on a military progress through a great part of the kingdom, receiving the submission of all the chiefs through whose countries he passed, taking the sons of some as pledges of their good faith, and seizing and destroying, in many instances, their castles and strongholds. In this manner, attended by the viscount Gormanstown, and other lords of the Pale, he traversed Offaley, Ely O'Carrol, Ormond, and Arra, and from thence, through Thomond, into Galway.§ In the town of Galway he remained seven days, and, during that time, it is said, sacrilegiously seized and confiscated the precious ornaments of the ancient church of St. Nicholas. But this story, though so long current, has no pretensions whatever to truth.‖ Some self-willed acts of this lord, in the course of his progress, brought down much censure upon him, from his fellow-commanders. But the crimes alleged against him were, his open leaning to the Geraldines, and, still worse, his favouring, to a disloyal extent, the native Irish themselves. Among the acts by which he gave most offence were the following:—Finding Mac William invested with the captainry of Clanricarde, he forcibly deposed him, and set up in his place Ulick de Burgh, afterwards earl of Clanricarde;—a mark of favour which could not fail to be ascribed to partiality towards the Geraldines, of whom Ulick, as we have seen, was a most active partisan. Another act that brought upon him still greater odium, was his selection of the chief O'Connor, who had been so lately in open rebellion against the king's government, as not merely his guide, but his close and confidential adviser.

All the chiefs who had made their submission, during this hosting, were bound to the observance thereof by indentures as well as by oaths. But Ormond, in stating this fact, adds, that neither from them, nor any other of all the "Irishrie," did he count on security or good faith for a moment longer than the king's forces continued among them.¶

The threatening league of the northern chiefs could boast, with its other supports, the sanction of a noble name, but too well known in the records of rebellion during this and former reigns, lord James of Desmond, the present pretender to the earldom. The lord of that title who, in the years 1523 and 1528, entered into a league with foreign powers for the invasion of Ireland, having died without male issue, there arose a contest for the right of inheritance between the two branches of the family, which was continued by their respective descendants; and the present claimants were James Fitz John, whose father had usurped and bequeathed to him both title and possession, and James Fitz Maurice, regarded generally as the rightful heir to the earldom. The father of the present possessor, who died in the year 1536, had, by connecting himself with the O'Brians, caused much embarrassment to the government. It was, indeed, chiefly by the aid of that powerful sept that he had been enabled to acquire possession of almost the whole of the country belonging to the earldom; as well as of those castles, garrisons, and lands, in the county of Limerick, which had belonged to the late earl of Kildare, but which, by the attainder of that lord, had accrued to the king.

* Ormond to the Council of Ireland, S. P. CCXXXVIII.

† This chief called the great O'Connor of Connaught, was the most powerful of the five chieftains of that name; the four others being, O'Connor of Offaley, O'Connor Roo, O'Connor Don, and O'Connor Corcumroo.—See S. P. CCXLV.

‡ Ormond to the Council of Ireland, S. P. CCXXXVIII.

§ Brabazon, &c. to Crumwell, S. P. CCXLIII.

‖ In an account kept by sir William Brabazon, vice-treasurer at this time in Ireland, of payments made for articles confiscated, we find an acknowledgment of the receipt of fory-five shillings from lord Leonard as the price of some ornaments confiscated at Galway. On this very slight foundation the whole story, it is probable, has been fabricated.

¶ Ormond to Crumwell, S. P. CCLXXXII.

Of a like complexion was the course pursued by James Fitz John, the present possessor of the title. Still allying himself with the O'Brians, and other "rebels," for objects of plunder and aggression, he yet continued to negotiate with the heads of the government, and employed all the weight of his powerful position to prevail upon them to recognise his title. He also occasionally even lent his aid to the king's forces; and, during a late progress of the lord deputy, had joined his camp at Owney, "with a good band of men."* But it was shown in that instance, that he was hardly less dangerous as a confederate, than as an enemy; for, on some dispute respecting a hostage, arising between him and the deputy, the earl of Desmond drew out his men in battle array against the king's troops; and it was only through the interference of sir Thomas Butler, the earl's intimate friend, that he was induced to withdraw his troops, and return quietly to his own territory.† For much of this headstrong conduct, the government itself was in a manner answerable, having, on a previous occasion, yielded to him with a degree of submissiveness which could not fail to encourage farther presumption. In the course of one of his negotiations with the lord deputy, respecting the terms of his proffered submission, the commissioners employed to conclude the treaty agreed to meet for that purpose at Clonmell. But Desmond, insisting on the strange privilege bestowed upon one of his ancestors, of never entering into any walled town, refused to come to Clonmell; and the royal commissioners, forgetful of their own and their sovereign's dignity, condescended to wait upon him in his camp.‡

Mean while the contest between him and young Fitz Maurice for the right of inheritance continued to be maintained by their respective parties; while the government, though clearly of opinion that justice and right were on the side of Fitz Maurice, yet, with a policy far more prudent than either just or dignified, forbore from pronouncing any decision in his favour; deeming it prudent to defer declaring which was the rightful heir till they could ascertain which was the more likely to prove the better subject. So extensive, however, was the influence acquired by Desmond in Munster, where he had drawn to his side all the most distinguished Geraldines,—the lord of Kerry, the lord Barry, the Knight of the Valley, and the White Knight,—that the council advised the expedient of sending to Ireland the other claimant, young Fitz Maurice, who was then with the king in England, and using him as an instrument to divide the party, and reduce the influence of his powerful competitor.

But the countenance afforded by Desmond to the young Gerald—already strong in the affections and sympathies of the Irish people—was the wrong most resented by the English party; and to such hypocritical lengths did they proceed, in their efforts to wean him from this youth's cause, that in articles delivered to him by the royal authority, it was unblushingly stated that the king, in his proceedings respecting Gerald, "had never intended any thing towards him but honour and wealth, and to have kindly cherished him, as his kinsman, in the same manner as his brother Edward was cherished by his mother, in England." The articles require, therefore, that Desmond should write to Gerald Fitz Gerald, and "advise him, in the same manner as his uncle, the lord deputy, had done, to make his submission to the king."§

The movements, indeed, of this young lord, and the native chiefs who espoused his cause, were become the principal objects of public solicitude and alarm.‖ A strong suspicion, as we have seen, had arisen, that Gerald's uncle, the present lord deputy secretly favoured the designs of those by whom his nephew was abetted and harboured. But there appear no valid grounds for this suspicion; while, on the other hand, satisfactory evidence of efforts made by him to recover this boy out of the hands of the confederates, occurs more than once in his official correspondence. Thus, in a letter addressed to the king, we find him reporting that he had concerted measures with William Wise¶—a gentleman of Waterford, then high in favour at court—for the apprehension of young

* Gray to Henry VIII., *S P.* CCXLIV.

† "Confession of the Vicounte Gormanistowne, oon of the Kinges most honourable Consaile," &c. &c.

‡ "And ferther we advertise your good lordship that we have parled with James of Desmonde in the feldes, without the town of Clonmell."—Sentleger, &c. to Crumwell, *S. P.* CLXXXIX.

Desmond, on his submission in the year 1541, "renounced and forsook the said privilege and exemptione."—*S. P.* CCCXXXIV., *note.*

§ According to O'Sullivan, the Catholic historian, his grandfather, the lord of Bear and Bantry, was one of those by whom young Gerald was sheltered during the time of his concealment;—"à Dermysio Osullevano, avo meo, Bearræ Principe."

‖ One the suggestions for the recovery of Gerald was, that he should be bought of the Irish chiefs. "It is good," says Brabazon, in a letter to Crumwell, "that by sum maner of meanes, this boy might be had, thogh he shuld be bought of sum of the traytors aboute him, and thei to have their pardons, whoez power, after his taking, is nothing."—*S. P.* CCLXX.

¶ Gray to Henry VIII., *S P.* CCXXVIII.

Gerald; and, writing at a later period to Cromwell, he mentions with earnestness his own anxious endeavours to prevail upon O'Neill to deliver the youth into his hands. One of the bitterest, indeed, of lord Leonard's enemies* has left on record reluctant testimony of the pains taken by him to remove his nephew out of reach of the influence of the northern chiefs. Notwithstanding all this, a year or two after, when this gallant and active public officer was brought to trial for high treason, the charge of having leagued with the earl of Desmond, O'Neill, O'Donnell, and others, to raise rebellion in favour of Gerald, formed one of the chief grounds of that impeachment, by which he was so cruelly, and, as it appears, unjustly, brought to the block.†

What definite purpose the confederates proposed to themselves in this new league, of which the young Gerald—or, as he was now styled, the earl of Kildare—formed the professed object, does not appear to have been well ascertained, even among themselves. Their application for aid to the emperor, and the French king, implied the hope of being enabled to cast off the English yoke; and not independence only, but the bright and flattering prospect of beholding once more the ancient monarchy of their country restored and triumphant, appears to have floated in dazzling dreams before their eyes. As a record of that day expresses it, "O'Neill's mind is to be king of Ireland, and to proclaim himself king at the Hill of Tara." But a far more ready and feasible object of the confederacy, was the seizing by force on all the late earl of Kildare's lands, now forfeit to the crown, and upholding Gerald, in defiance of the law, as their rightful possessor.

In addition to all these various grounds of dissension, religious differences, which have formed ever since one of the most active ingredients of Irish strife, had begun, at this time, to influence considerably the views and counsels of the Geraldine party, whose leaders had hitherto opposed every step of the new faith; and to the title of "tyrant," which they had long bestowed upon the English monarch, now added bitterly, that of "heretic."‡ With the Scottish monarch, James V., who was no less hostile to the Lutheran doctrines than themselves, they were evidently in constant communication; and the bishop O'Donnell, and others, despatched by them to Rome, repaired previously to the Scottish court for farther instructions.§ There were likewise settled at this time in Ulster no less than 2000 Scots, whose ancestors had fled thither for refuge, when driven out of the isles, and with whom James, the present monarch, was secretly tampering, to secure their aid in his plans for embarrassing the English government in Ireland. With this view, he had twice sent for Alexander Karrogh, the captain of the Ulster Scots, to hold personal conference with him; and the mysterious silence preserved by this chief, with respect to the object of his two visits, was viewed by the English party as ominous of mischief.‖

Some of these Scottish settlers of Ulster having, in the year 1538, got forcible possession of the lands of Lecale, the lord deputy, in the course of a "hosting" which he now made into that territory,—professedly with the hope of releasing his nephew out of the hands of O'Neill,—took from Mac Gennis, a northern chief, the bold castle of Dundrum, one of the strongest holds in the kingdom, and, seizing, in all, eight castles, during his circuit, expelled the Scots from their usurped lands.¶ He is accused of having, in the course of this expedition, burnt the cathedral church of Down, defaced the monuments of the saints Patrick, Bridget, and Columb-kill, and committed many other such wanton acts of sacrilege. But for this generally received story there appear to be no more real grounds than for the similar charge brought against him, respecting the collegiate church of St. Nicholas at Galway. Lord Leonard Gray remained to the last attached to the ancient faith; and at this very time, when historians represent him as defacing and destroying the monuments of catholic worship, he was, on the contrary, provoking the taunts of some of his reformed fellow statesmen, by kneeling devoutly before the "Idol of Trim,"—as an

* Thomas Alen to Crumwell, *S. P.* CCLVII.

† The following circumstance mentioned by Stanihurst, who had met and conversed with Gerald, after the restoration of his title, would tell strongly in favour of lord Leonard, on this point, had the story come from a somewhat more trustworthy source.—"As touching the first article that brought him most of all out of conceipt with the king, I mooved question to the erle of Kildare, whether the tenor thereof were true or false? His lordship thereto answered, *bona fide*, that he neuer spake with the lord Grete, neuer sent messenger to him, nor receiued message or letter from him."—Stanihurst, apud Holinshed, *S. P.* CXCIV.

‡ "The cause of this traicterous conspirid treason, as the traictours doo pleynly declare, both the said pretensid erle of Desmond and O Neile, and O Dowayll, is, that the king's highness is an heretik against the feith, bycause he obeyith not, and beleveth not the bishop of Romes usurpid prymacy."—R. Cowley to Crumwell, *S. P.* CCLXXV.

§ J. Alen to Crumwell *S. P.* CCLXXII. ‖ Ibid.

¶ Gray to Crumwell, *S. P.* CCLXXIX.

ancient image of the Virgin, in the church of that town, was now mockingly styled,—and hearing "three or four masses" in succession.*

Though, under other circumstances, a league so general as that now formed among the chiefs, might have proved perilous to the English power, there was much in the present state of the public mind, depressed and disheartened as all had been by the crushing results of the late conflict, that afforded, for a time, sufficient security against any very serious infraction of the peace. It appears that there were few, even of the inhabitants of the Pale, who had not, at some period or other of the last rebellion, supplied lord Thomas with aid, in men, money, or victuals; and the consciousness that their lands and goods were thereby placed at the king's mercy, kept them in continual alarm.

Towards the latter end of this year, the numbers and strength of the Geraldine league had considerably increased; and, in addition to those who had hitherto been its chief leaders,—O'Donnell, O'Neill, O'Brian, and the earl of Desmond—the confederacy was now farther strengthened by the accession of O'Neill of Claneboy, O'Rourke, Mac Loughlin, Mac Dermot, and many other Irish captains, besides a great host of Scots, both of the "out isles" and the main land of Scotland. In this critical juncture, it was singularly fortunate for the government that the mutual hostility so long subsisting between the lord deputy and the house of Butler, should have been, on both sides, generously abandoned; and that lord James Butler, now earl of Ormond,†—through the recent death of his father, and the king's restoration of the ancient title,—co-operated cordially with lord Leonard Gray in all those measures which the present crisis required.‡

The danger that now more immediately threatened the Pale arose from the coalition formed between the great O'Brian, as he was specially styled, and the earl of Desmond,—the two most daring and powerful of the national champions; and as it was accounted, doubtless, the more prudent as well as more vigorous policy, to anticipate whatever blow might be intended, and thus prevent at once the aggression and the perilous infection of its example, a force, under the joint command of the lord deputy and the earl of Ormond, was marched, at the close of this year, into Munster. The principal object of this expedition, as stated in a despatch from Ormond himself, was, "by policy and strength to pluck from O'Brian all his forces and wings on this side the Shannon;"§ and its leading events shall here be as briefly narrated as the copious details on the subject, furnished by official records, will permit.

Regaining possession, in some treacherous manner, of the castle of Roscrea, which belonged to Ormond by inheritance, but had been seized by the Mac Meaghers of Ikerin, the commanders proceeded from thence to Modren, a castle belonging to the O'Carrols, where the chief of that sept came in, on safe-conduct, and surrendered himself and his wife, as hostages to the lord deputy. Thither were sent to him also the hostages of Mac Brian of Arra, Regan of Owney, O'Dwyer of Kilnamanna, and a number of other chiefs of the neigbouring districts, pledging each of them to preserve allegiance, and pay to the king a certain yearly tribute. Continuing his march into Munster, lord Leonard succeeded in reducing to allegiance Gerald Mac Shane, the White Knight, the lord Barry,—the latter nobleman not having come near any lord deputy for years,—Mac Carthy Reagh, the Red Barry, and other adherents of the earl of Desmond; all of whom came in person to the earl of Ormond's house at Thurles, and there bound themselves, by oaths and hostages, to preserve allegiance to the crown.

At Imokilly, the deputy delivered up to James Fitz Maurice—the rightful claimant of the earldom of Desmond, who appears to have accompanied the expedition—all the castles and lands in that barony which had been usurped by James Fitz John, together with all other castles between Youghall and Cork, excepting those only which belonged to lord Barry, who had just given in his submission. In like manner, the lands of Kerricurriky, and others belonging to his grandfather, were now put into the hands of James Fitz Maurice.‖

In O'Callaghan's country the deputy remained encamped for four days and nights, intending to have passed the river Avonmore, now the Blackwater, and from thence to have

* "They thre wold not come in the chapell, where the Idoll of Trym stode, to thintent they wold not occasion the people; notwithstanding my lord deputie, veray devoutely kneleng befor Hir, hard thre or fower masses."—T. Alen to Crumwell, State Papers, CCLVII.

This statue was burnt soon after; and the gifts of the pilgrims, in the same church, taken away. Among other cherished relics destroyed, at this time, was the ancient staff of St. Patrick.

† The title of Ormond had been restored to this lord's father, on the death of Thomas Boleyn, earl of Ormond, without issue male, in the year 1537.

‡ "This unytie that is nowe knit betwixt him and me, shall not, God willing, dissever for my parte."—Ormond to Crumwell, *S. P.* CCLXXXII.

§ Ormond to Crumwell, *S. P.* CCLXXXII. ‖ Ibid.

proceeded to the county of Limerick. But the river was then so much swollen, that the army was unable to pass; and, in the mean time, the earl of Desmond made his appearance on the opposite bank,—whether attended by any armed force does not appear,—and from thence signified to them that he had taken part with O'Brian against the earl of Ormond; that he would continue still to stand by that chief; and that, moreover, O'Brian would have, on his side, "all the Irishry of Ireland." The lord deputy, it is added, "being sore moved by these words," immediately drew off his army, and marched back to Cork; with little hope, it is clear, either on his part, or that of Ormond, that a single one of those lords and chiefs, who had so lately given in their submission, would, with such strong inducements to revolt, remain long true to their forced engagements. It is worth remarking, that the force thus employed to strike awe into the whole kingdom consisted but of 400 men under lord Leonard Gray, and about the same number of horsemen, kern and galloglasses, under the command of the earl of Ormond.*

It was in the course, probably, of this "hosting" of the lord deputy, that the battle took place between him and the chiefs O'Neill and O'Donnell, which became so memorable in the Irish annals, under the name of "the Battle of Belahoe;"† but of which, in contemporary English records, there occurs not the slightest mention. The two chiefs, it appears, had combined in a predatory inroad into Meath,—attracted far less, however, by the glories of Tara, than by the plunder and havoc expected from their foray; and, having destroyed the towns of Ardee and Navan, were returning loaded with spoil, when, being pursued by lord Leonard, they were overtaken, near the Ford of Belahoe, and, after a weak attempt at resistance, were all confusedly put to flight, leaving their booty in the hands of the pursuers.

However meager were the immediate results of the lord deputy's circuit, its general effect, as manifesting watchfulness, and, still more, union, among the ruling powers, was by no means unuseful nor speedily forgotton. The hope of aid from foreign powers, which the northern chiefs had been led to indulge, was recently revived by the meeting, at Paris, between the emperor and the French king.‡ But at no period does there appear to have been much ground for this hope; and an event which occurred at the commencement of the present year,—the escape of young Gerald into France,—dissolved at once the sole bond which had held the leaders of so many factions, for a time, together, and awakened in the Irish a spirit of concert no less formidable than, luckily for their masters, it was rare.

The safe removal of Gerald to the continent had been contrived by his tutor, Levrous, and the chief O'Donnell, who had him secretly conveyed, at night, in a small cockboat, on board a ship bound for St. Malo. Besides other precautions employed to conceal his person and rank, he "had on him," we are told, "only a saffron shirt, and was bareheaded, like one of the wild Irish."§ The account given of this youth's adventures, after his departure from Ireland, is garnished with much of that dull and circumstantial fiction, in which the chronicler, who is our sole authority for most of these stories, delights to indulge.‖ That efforts were made by the English king, through his agents abroad, to obtain possession of Gerald, either by stratagem or negotiation, is sufficiently proved by existing documents; and such were the notions of his rank and importance which this eager pursuit after him excited abroad, that, wherever he went, the idea prevailed that he was really king of Ireland, and that the English monarch had cruelly disinherited him of his right.¶ Notwithstanding, however, the plans devised by Henry to have him seized, the youth succeeded in reaching his kinsman, cardinal Pole, at Rome, and remained in Italy, under his protection, several years. Through the munificence of this illustrious man, as well as the patronage of Cosmo I., grand duke of Tuscany, he was enabled to

* Ormond to Cromwell, *S. P.* CCLXXXII.

† "That prosperous fight," says sir John Davies, "at Belahoo, on the borders of Meath, the memory whereof is yet famous." He cites, as his authority, an Irish MS., the Book of Howth. There is also an account of the leading events of the conflict in the Annals of the Four Masters, ad ann. 1539. The pretended particulars of this battle given by Cox, Leland, and others, out of Holinshed, are all from the suspicious mint of Stanihurst; who, although he lived, as we have seen, near enough to the time of these events, to have conversed with Gerald after he was restored to his title, is little to be trusted in any of his details; and, in this instance, has evidently eked out whatever he may have found in the Irish annals with flat and puerile figments of his own.

‡ "Remembrances to my Lord Pryve Seall," *S. P.* CCLXXXVIII.

§ "The sayd Fytzgarethe was convayed aborde the ship in the nyght, in a small cocke, havyng on but a saffronyd shurtt and barheaddyd, lyke one of the wyllde Yreshe, and with him 3 persons."—Warner to the English Ambassador, *S. P.* CCCVI.

‖ Stanihurst, ap. Holinshed.

¶ "And, in all this countre, whor he passyd, he was, and is to this day, namyd to be king of Yrland, and that the king our master hathe disheretyd him of hys ryght."—Warner to the English Ambassador, *S. P.* CCCVI.

acquire such learning and accomplishments as befitted the high rank to which he was born. This rank he partially recovered in the course of the following reign, when he was taken into favour by Edward VI.; and, as soon as queen Mary came to the throne, the honours and estates of his ancestors were, by letters patent, restored to him.

CHAPTER XLVI.

HENRY VIII.—(*Continued.*)

Course of the Reformation in England—principal events that marked its progress—first steps towards its introduction into Ireland—opposed by Archbishop Cromer—supported by Archbishop Browne.—Act of supremacy—strongly opposed by the spiritual Proctors.—Tithe and other measures defeated by them.—Parliament frequently prorogued.—Bill for the exclusion of Proctors from parliament.—Grant to the king of the twentieth part of the church revenues.—Character of Archbishop Browne—is rebuked by the king—his differences with the Bishop of Meath.—Few of the persons in authority adopt the new creed.—Oath of supremacy taken by two Archbishops and eight Bishops.—Commission for the suppression of religious houses.—Numerous applications for a share of the spoil.—Urgent requests of Archbishop Browne.—Mild form of the change in Ireland.—No instance of severe punishment on account of opinion.—Prevalence of peace throughout the kingdom.—Recall of Lord Leonard Gray.—Peace concluded with O'Neill.—Assemblage of Irish at Fowre.—Liberal policy of the king—conciliates the Irish chiefs.—Desmond disposed to submit—efforts of Ormond to win him over.—Loyal disposition of most of the Irish lords.—O'Connor refractory.—This chief also submits.—Chivalrous conduct of Tirlogh O'Toole.—Submission of Desmond—amicable arrangement between him and Ormond.—Parley with O'Brian.—Execution of Lord Leonard Gray.—Parliament attended for the first time by the Irish chiefs.—Title of King of Ireland bestowed upon Henry.—Proclamation of a general pardon.—Great rejoicings.—Kindness of the king to Desmond and other lords.—O'Neill and O'Donnell make their submission.—Titles and honours bestowed on O'Neill, the O'Brians, and Mac William.—Praise of the king's policy.—Much of the credit due to Sentleger.—Irish troops employed in France—their distinguished bravery.—Great expedition under Lennox and Ormond against Scotland.

A FEW years before the period we have now reached, that great religious revolution of which Germany had been the birth-place, extended its influence to the shores of England, and was now working a signal change in the spiritual condition of that kingdom. In Germany, from an early date, the struggles of the emperors with the popes had conduced to engender a feeling of ill-will towards Rome, which required but little excitement to rouse it into hostility. In the German, too, as well as in the English reformation, finance may be said to have gone hand in hand with faith: as it was the abuse of his spiritual privileges by the pope, for the purpose of fiscal exaction, that gave to Luther his first advantage-ground in attacking the Roman see.

Nor was England wholly unprepared, by previous experience, for the assaults now made, not only on the property, but the ancient doctrines of her church; as the sect of the Lollards may be said to have anticipated the leading principles of the Reformation; while the suppression and spoliation of the alien priories, in the reign of Henry V., and a similar plunder committed by Edward II., on the rich order of the Knights Templars, had furnished precedents, though on a comparatively small scale, for the predatory achievements of the present monarch. A brief account of the leading events that marked the progress of the reformed faith in England, from about the time of Fitz Gerald's outbreak to the period where we are now arrived, will not be unuseful towards a clear exposition of the course and effects of that great religious change in Ireland.

The first decisive step taken in the difference between Henry VIII. and the see of Rome, was in the year 1534, when the pope, by declaring the validity of the king's marriage with Catherine of Arragon, pronounced sentence against the union, so much desired

by him, with Anne Boleyn. As this sentence was only enforced by a mere threat of excommunication, in case the king should persist in his project of a divorce, an opening was left through which some compromise, it is thought, might have been effected. But the hasty act of Clement's successor, Paul III., precluded finally any such chance of reconciliation. From that moment, the boundaries of spiritual and temporal power began, on both sides, to be violently transgressed. Not content with declaring Henry himself excommunicated, and laying his whole kingdom under an interdict,—measures which, whatever might have been their prudence, were within the scope of his spiritual powers,—Paul, by this bull, deprived the English king of his crown; dissolved all leagues of catholic princes with him; released his subjects from their oaths of allegiance, and delivered his kingdom up a prey to any invader.

While the pontiff was thus rashly outrunning the bounds of his spiritual dominion, the English monarch, on the other hand, self-invested with the supreme headship of the church, was bringing the terrors of temporal punishment to enforce the new powers he had assumed, and show how expeditiously a people may be schooled into reformation by a free use of the rack, the halter, and the stake.

However injudicious, indeed, as regarded mere policy, was the anathema hurled at Henry by the Roman pontiff, it is to be recollected, that intelligence had shortly before reached Rome of the trial and execution of the venerable Fisher, archbishop of Rochester,—a crime which, deepened, as it was, by the insults cast on the aged victim, was heard on the continent, we are told, with indignation and tears.* Soon after followed the sentence on the illustrious sir Thomas More, who, because he refused to acknowledge that the king was supreme head of the church,—a proposition which, three years earlier, it would have been heresy to assert,—was sentenced to die the death of a traitor; nor could all his genius and knowledge, his views extending beyond the horizon of his own times, or the playful philosophy that graced both his life and his writings obtain from the tyrant any farther mark of mercy than the mere substitution, in the mode of executing him, of the axe for the halter.

Having achieved thus his double object,—supreme sovereignty over the church, as well as the state,—Henry's next step, to which the former had been but preparatory, was the spoliation of the clergy; and whatever wrong and ruin followed in the wake of his predatory course, no compassion is, at all events, due to the higher clergy and spiritual peers, who were themselves the obsequious abettors of all the tyrant's worst measures. Whether, like Gardiner, adhering still to the creed of Rome, or, like Cranmer and others, secretly reformers, the prelates of both the religious parties were equally tools of the throne; and alike servilely lent their aid to every aggression on the rights and property of the church.

The proceedings, as unmanly as they were merciless, against the ill-fated Anne Boleyn, whom the king, having first branded without scruple, then butchered without remorse, have no farther relation to Ireland than as showing how rapidly scenes of pageantry and bloodshed succeeded each other in this frightful reign. By a parliament convened at Dublin, an act was passed, pronouncing the marriage of the king with Catherine of Arragon to be null and void, declaring the inheritance of the crown to be in the king and his heirs by queen Anne, and pronouncing it high treason to oppose this succession. Scarcely, however, had this act passed, when intelligence arrived of the trial and execution of Anne Boleyn, and the marriage of the king to lady Jane Seymour. As the Irish legislature, like that of England, at this period, was a body employed but to register edicts, the same parliament that had just passed this act, no less readily repealed it, and pronounced, by another law, sentence of attainder upon the late queen and all who had been condemned as her supposed accomplices.†

It is not a little curious to observe how slow in ripening were the evil qualities of Henry's nature, and how long dormant in him was that love of cruelty which the boundless power he afterwards attained enabled him so monstrously to indulge. For no less than five and twenty years after his accession, we find recorded of him but two instances of severity, and one of them a case admitting of justification.‡ It was not till he pretended to sovereignty over the thoughts, the inward consciences of his subjects, and assumed a right to dispose of their souls, as well as their bodies,—it was not, in short, till he had tasted blood, as a bigot, that his true nature, as brute and tyrant fully broke out.

Having now assumed to himself a sort of spiritual dictatorship, and usurped, in his

* Pole de Unitat ,—quoted by Turner, *Hist. of Henry VIII.* chap. xxvii.

† Leland,—who refers to Ir. Stat. 28th Hen. VIII., not printed.

‡ The only persons who, during that period, had suffered for crimes against the state, were Pole, earl of Suffolk, and Stafford, duke of Buckingham.

own person, that privilege of infallibility against which he had rebelled, as claimed by the pope, Henry proceeded to frame and promulgate a formulary of faith for his whole kingdom, which, instead of being submitted to the boasted tribunal of private judgment, was ordered to be adopted by all implicitly, under pain of tortures and death.

The king's position, in thus holding supremacy over two rival creeds, from both of which he himself materially dissented, and such as entirely suited his tastes, both as disputant and persecutor; and even enabled him, as in the case of the wretched Lambert,—with whom he condescended to hold a public disputation,—first, to browbeat his trembling antagonist in argument, and then to complete the triumph by casting him into the flames. The penal power was, indeed, in his hands, a double-edged sword, for whose frightful sweep his complaisant legislators had provided victims from both religions. For, as all who denied the king's supremacy were declared traitors, and all who rejected the papal creed were pronounced heretics, the freest scope was afforded to cruelty for the alternate indulgence of its tastes, whether in hanging conscientious catholics for treason, or sending protestants to perish in the flames for heresy. On one occasion, singled out of many, the horrible fruits of this policy were strikingly exhibited. In the same cart were conveyed to execution three catholics and three protestants; the former, for denying the king's supremacy, the latter, for denying the doctrine of transubstantiation. The catholics were hanged, drawn and quartered, the protestants burned.

In the year 1539, the last of those spiritual ordinances by which Henry sought to coerce the very consciences of his subjects, made its appearance, in the form of an Act for abolishing diversity of opinions; or, as it was called,—from the savage cruelty with which its enactments were enjoined,—the bloody Statute of the Six Articles. This violent law, by which almost all the principal catholic doctrines were enjoined peremptorily, under pain of death and forfeiture, was aimed, with ominous malignity, against those of the king's own ministers, who, while appearing to adopt so obsequiously all his views, were, he knew, secretly pledged disciples of the new German school of faith. Most amply, however, has this duplicity been avenged, by the lasting stain brought upon the memories of those spiritual peers—Cranmer himself among the number—who, affecting to be convinced by a speech which the king had delivered in the course of the debate, gave their assent to this arbitrary statute and the barbarous penalties by which it was enforced.* There were only two among the prelates, Latimer and Shaxton, who had the courage to refuse their sanction to this sanguinary act.†

While such, in ecclesiastical affairs, was the odious policy of this monarch's reign, the spirit of its civil administration was no less subversive of all popular right and freedom. By an act, unparalleled in servility, the parliament gave to the king's proclamation the same force as to a statute enacted by their own body; thus basely surrendering into the hands of the monarch the only stronghold of the nation's liberties.

Such, briefly sketched, were the leading events that marked the progress of the reformed faith in England, during a few years preceding the period to which I have brought down the civil history of Ireland; and I have been induced thus far to wander beyond the bounds of my prescribed task, in order, by bringing before the reader both pictures in juxta-position, to show how different was the course and character of the Reformation in the two countries.

In articles entered into by the earl of Ossory, on receiving a grant from the crown in the year 1534, of the counties of Kilkenny, Waterford, and Tipperary, as well as of the territories of Ossory and Ormond, we find the first step taken by the king towards the enforcement of the reformed faith, in Ireland; one of the engagements then entered into by this earl having been to resist the usurped jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome.‡ In less than a fortnight from the date of these articles, the violent rebellion under lord Thomas Fitz Gerald broke out; and amidst the general strife and confusion which then prevailed, little was thought of or done for the advancement of the new doctrines. It does not appear, indeed, that any strong measures for that object had been resorted to before the spring of the following year, when a writ was issued for the apprehension of Cromer, archbishop of Armagh, on a charge of treason; that prelate having vehemently resisted the king's claim of spiritual supremacy, and laid a solemn curse upon all who should give their assent to the proposed change.

* "Notwithstanding my lord of Canterbury, my lord of Ely, my lord of Salisbury, my lords of Worcester, Rochester, and St. Davyes, defended the contrary a long time, yet finally his highness confounded them all with goodlie learning."—*MS. cited by Lingard.*

† Hume.

‡ "Grant of the government of Kilkenny, Tipperary, Waterford, Ossory, and Ormond, to Ossory, who engages to assist Skeffyngton and the king's deputy for the time being, to reduce Desmond and to resist the pope.—*State Paper*, LXXII.

On the other hand, the cause of the new creed found a no less strenuous champion in George Browne, the archbishop of Dublin, who had been recently advanced to that see, and was the first of the clergy in Ireland that declared in favour of the reformed faith. To him, as a member of the commission appointed to bring that realm to a due acknowledgment of the king's spiritual supremacy, was specially intrusted the management of this arduous task. But Browne's report of the results of his mission afforded no hope of any such assent to the royal creed as it had met with from the great mass of the English people. His most effective opponent, Cromer, was a prelate whose "gravity, learning, and sweetness of demeanour,"* had rendered him generally popular, and who had drawn to his own opinions, on this subject, most of the suffragans and clergy within his jurisdiction. Two messengers were accordingly despatched by them to Rome; and it was much feared by Browne and his party that the pope on learning the state of affairs, would order O'Neill to oppose the projected changes.†

Seeing no hope, therefore, from the church commission, Browne advised the calling of a parliament in Ireland, which, following the example of the English legislature, should enforce by statute the general acknowlegement of the king's supremacy. In pursuance of this advice, a parliament was held the following year,‡ in the city of Dublin, and among the earliest measures submitted to it was an act for establishing the supremacy of the crown, or, as it was briefly styled, the Act of the Supreme Head.§ It was also proposed to this parliament that there should be no appeals to Rome, on pain of præmunire; that the clergy should pay first-fruits to the king, instead of to the pope, and that all who defended or asserted the authority of the bishop of Rome were subject to the penalty of præmunire. By another act, the twentieth part of the annual profits of all ecclesiastical promotions were to be granted to the king, his heirs and successors, for ever.

These measures, in the course of their enactment, were opposed vehemently by the spiritual proctors,‖ a class of men who had formerly been summoned to parliament only as counsellors, or assistants, without any voice or suffrage, but who had for some time assumed a right to vote as members of that body, and so much obstructed, at this crisis, the plans and measures of the reformers, that an act was passed, at a later period, declaring the proctors not to be members of the body of parliament. Owing to the exertions of this party in the commons, aided by the king's sergeant, Patrick Barnwell, the measure of the grant to the king of the twentieth part of the church revenues, spiritual and temporal, did not pass before the month of October, 1537.¶ Another important measure, delayed for several months by the same cause, was an act for the suppression of certain monasteries and religious houses comprised in a commission sent over, for that purpose, by the king.

In the correspondence of the lord deputy and council, at this period, we find an unworthy intrigue disclosed, having for its object to obtain from Cromwell the advancement of Basnet, a staunch follower of the new doctrines, to the dignity of the dean of St. Patrick's cathedral.** The minor details of the transaction come hardly within the range of regular history; but the fact that Cromwell, for the essential aid he lent to this intrigue, by promoting Basnet to the deanery, received the sum of sixty pounds, shows that, even at that dawning hour of the reformed creed, a corrupt traffic in spiritual patronage already prevailed among its promoters.

In the month of January (1537) the parliament was again assembled; but so perseveringly did the proctors still continue their opposition, having now openly on their side the bishops and abbots, that little progress was made in any of the bills remaining to be disposed of; and even of those which the commons agreed to pass, some were afterwards thrown out by the upper house. In this manner, the bill for granting to the king the twentieth part of all ecclesiastical revenues, though passed by the house of commons, was rejected by the spiritual lords.†† It became necessary, therefore, again to prorogue the parliament, and employ the recess in devising some remedy for this continued obstruction in the way of their measures.

* Ware's *Hist. of the Bishops.*

† "The common people of this isle," says Browne, "are more zealous in their blindness than the saints and martyrs were in truth at the beginning of the gospel.... It is feared O'Neill will be ordered by the bishop of Rome to oppose your lordship's orders from the king's highness, for the natives are much in numbers within his power."—Browne to Crumwell, *Harleian Miscel.* vol. v.

‡ A. D. 1536.

§ The Lord Deputy and Council of Ireland to Crumwell, State Papers, CXXVII.

‖ "Of which (proctors) Patrick Bernewell, the kinges serjaunt is oon, pryncypall champion; who, and in effect all his lynage of the Bernewells, have been gret doers and adherentes, pryvay counsaillors to the late erle of Kildare."—Robert Cowley to Crumwell, State Papers, CXLIX.

¶ The Lord Deputy and Council of Ireland to Crumwell, State Papers, CLXIV.

** Gray and Brabazon to Crumwell, State Papers, CLXVIII.

On being consulted, the king's council declared that the proctors had "no voice in parliament," and referred to entries on the rolls as proving that, even in cases where their assent or dissent was recorded, it was not considered to be material, nor allowed any weight in the decision of the matters in question. In accordance with this opinion, an act was prepared to put down the "usurpation of proctors," which, on the re-assembling of parliament, was one of the first measures passed; and the refractory spirit which had so long thwarted the plans of the government having been thus far got rid of, the act for the grant to the king of the twentieth part of the "spirituality," as well as for the suppression of the religious houses, was without much difficulty carried. So welcome was this grant to Henry, with whom money was, at all times, a pressing consideration, that, in a special letter addressed to the lords spiritual, he expressed his acknowledgments for the gift.*

The position, at this juncture, of Browne, the archbishop of Dublin, was not a little arduous and trying; for, as he had been the first of the clergy to embrace the Reformation, so he continued to be almost the only one who took active steps for its advancement; and while, by the over-zeal of a fresh convert, he made himself odious to the party he had deserted, his self-sufficiency and assuming pomp made him no less offensive to those whose doctrines he had espoused. A letter addressed to him about this time (1537) by the king,† after charging him with "lightness in behaviour," adds,—"Such is the elation of your mind, in pride, that, glorying in foolish ceremonies, and delighting in We and Us, all virtue and honesty is almost banished from you." In replying to these heavy charges, which wear the appearance, it must be owned, of exaggeration, the archbishop sets forth his own spiritual services in "declaring to the people the only Gospel of Christ," and inducing his hearers "utterly to despise the usurped power of the bishop of Rome." But the steps taken by him to advance the king's temporal interests, are those he dwells upon with the most emphasis and self-complacency; reminding his majesty that he had been not only the first spiritual man that moved the twentieth part of first-fruits, but that he had promoted, as far as in him lay, the "like first-fruits of all monasteries, not before motioned."‡

Between this prelate and lord Leonard Gray there occurred frequent and bitter differences, for which their variance on religious questions may be thought sufficiently to account. But even with Staples, the bishop of Meath, the only prelate who joined in supporting the king's supremacy, this domineering archbishop could not bring himself amicably to agree. Who can wonder that the people of Ireland should have almost unanimously rejected a creed of which Henry VIII. was the supreme head, and this most assuming and worldly minded prelate the earliest apostle?§ So narrow, in fact, was the footing gained, at this time, by the new doctrines, even among the higher authorities of the Pale, that, with the exception of lord James Butler, the master of the rolls, the vice-treasurer, Brabazon, the archbishop of Dublin, and one or two others of little note, all the official personages constituting the government, including the lord deputy himself, remained still attached to the ancient faith.‖

The only test or symbol of the new orthodoxy required, as yet, from either ecclesiastics or laymen, was the taking of the oath binding them to acknowledge the king's supremacy; and it may be presumed that neither by the clergy nor laity was this substitution of the supremacy of the crown for that of the pope considered as a change seriously affecting their faith, since almost all the native lords and clergy came forward, as we shall see presently, to confirm their allegiance by this form of oath. If, in place of a mere acknowledgment of the king's supremacy,—a claim, the extent of which neither the chiefs nor perhaps the clergy themselves clearly understood,—the renunciation of some tenet or observance endeared and hallowed by old tradition and daily habit, had been demanded as the pledge of orthodoxy, the same tranquil submission would not have attended the first advances of the reformed creed.

Without pausing, however, to consider what were the causes of Ireland's exemption,

* King Henry VIII. to the Spiritual Lords of Ireland, State Papers, CC.

† State Papers, CLXXIV.

‡ Archbishop Browne to King Henry VIII., S. P. CLXXXVI.

§ The character given of this prelate by Staples, bishop of Meath, is, as far as we can judge, not overcoloured:—"He now bostyth hyme self to ruell al the clergy under our soveran lord, and he hath gyvyne such a tast of hys good demeanour as that every honest man is not only wery theroff, but rekonyth that pryd and arrogance hath ravyshyd hyme from the ryght remembrance of hymeself."—Bishop Staples to Sentleger, S. P. CCXXXIII.

‖ "Excepte it be the Archebyschope of Dublyn, whiche dothe here in preching sett forthe Godes worde, with dew obedyence to ther prynce, and my good lord Butler, the master of the rolles, Mr. Thezaurer, and on or 2 more, whiche are of smalle repytachons, here is ellys nöon, from the byeste, may abyde the heryng of hitt, spirituall, as they call them, nor temperall."—Agard to Crumwell, S. P. CCXVII.

at this period, from that dragooning process of conversion to which England was so brutally subjected, suffice it to say, that such, at this time, was the comparative state of the two kingdoms; and that whatever of peace and religious tolerance these islands could boast had all taken refuge on the Irish shore. This very year, while the scaffolds of England were reeking with Christain blood, and men were expiring, by a slow fire, with the words "none but Christ, none but Christ," upon their lips, not only were the axe, the faggot, and halter, left entirely without employ in Ireland, but the harshest punishment we find inflicted for religious offences, during that period, was the commitment of the delinquents to Dublin castle. Thus, a grey friar was imprisoned for having preached against the "breaking or pulling down of churches," and a like punishment was inflicted by Browne in two several cases;—the offender, in one instance, having been the suffragan of the bishop of Meath, who, in a late sermon preached by him, had prayed, first, for the bishop of Rome, then for the emperor, and lastly, for the king, saying of the latter, "I pray God he never depart this world, until that he hath made amends."* The other offender committed by the archbishop was a prebendary of St. Patrick's, named Humphrey, who when performing service in his own church, had not only omitted to read the "Form of the Beads" (certain instructions for praying, drawn up by Browne himself,) but when his curate went up into the pulpit for that purpose, suddenly interrupted him, and began, with the choir, to sing high mass; and for this offence against his formulary the archbishop sent him to prison.† A. D. 1538.

While such are the stretches of power with which even this proud and contentious churchman appears to have been chargeable, the general forbearance of the civil authorities, during the whole, I may say, of this reign, from all violent means of enforcing the new creed, was even still more worthy of wonder and praise. The mixed composition, perhaps, of the present government, in which were brought together adherents of both the contending creeds, might have had some share in producing the tolerance and general tranquillity that now prevailed; for, not merely was this balance of counsels in the governing body likely to lead to a middle and tolerant course, but a sort of security was thus afforded to both the religious parties, that nothing violent, was likely to be attempted against either by a government counting as its most forward leaders such men as lord Butler and the lord Leonard Gray; the one a friend of the reforming archbishop, and a warm abettor of all his innovations; the other a known adherent of the ancient faith, having knelt publicly, as we have seen, in one of his late circuits, before the statue of the blessed virgin at Trim.‡

Such mutual tolerance, on matters of belief, appears the more remarkable at this very crisis, when one of the principal objects of the league formed by O'Donnell, O'Neill, and the Geraldines, was supposed to be the defence of their country's creed against the innovations of the English reformers; and when it was believed that they were actually negotiating with foreign powers for a force to aid them in this design. An event that occurred this year, about midsummer, conduced to strengthen such an impression. Among the papers of a Franciscan friar, who had been apprehended and committed to the castle of Dublin, was found a letter addressed to O'Neill, and professing to be written by the bishop of Metz, in the name of the council of cardinals. The object of this letter was to exhort O'Neill, as he valued "the glory of the mother church, the honour of St. Peter, and his own security," to oppose himself to the spreading heresy. The writer informs him of an ancient prophecy of St. Laserian, an Irish archbishop of Cashel, which predicts that "the church of Rome shall surely fall when the Catholic faith is once overthrown in Ireland;" and accordingly exhorts him to "animate the people of the Holy Island in this pious cause."§ The bearer of this letter—in which, among other marks of imposture, the prophecy is attributed to an archbishop of Cashel, of whom there is no trace in our annals—was on the point of being sent over prisoner to England, when he put an end to his life in Dublin castle.

Early in the following year, two archbishops and eight bishops, after hearing a sermon preached by the archbishop of Dublin, in support of the king's supremacy, and the "extinguishment" of the bishop of Rome, all took the oaths relating both to the succession and the supremacy.‖ A. D. 1539.

* Archbishop Browne to Crumwell, S. P. CCXXV.
† Id. S P. CCXXVI.
‡ In speaking of this statue, Browne says, "There goithe a commen brewte amonges the Yrish men, that I entende to pluke down Our Lady of Tryme, with other places of Pilgramages, as the Holy Crosse and souch like; which in deade I never attempted, although my conscience wolde right well serve me to oppresse such ydolles."—S. P. CCXXXVI.
§ Harleian Miscell. vol. v.—Cox. ‖ The Council of Ireland to Crumwell, State Papers, CCLXII.

Although the act for the suppression of religious houses was passed in the year 1537, the appointment of a commission to carry it into effect did not take place till the present year; when following the course pursued in England, a form of inquiry was employed to usher in an act already determined upon, and the suppression of the religious houses was quietly effected. In the mean while, the spoils expected from this harvest of rapine were already in fancy parcelled out among the great lords and officers of the Pale, both lay and spiritual. It had been suggested, in the year 1537, that, to reward the services of lord James Butler, and his father, without farther encroachment on the king's lands, a grant should be made to them of the monastery and lands of Duiske, together with some other march abbey, either in Kilkenny or Tipperary.* But this suggestion does not appear to have been carried into effect. The lord chancellor Alen endeavoured to secure for himself the monastery of St. Thomas Court, near Dublin;† but the site and circuit of that venerable abbey were granted, in the year 1543, to sir Thomas Brabazon, then vice-treasurer, the ancestor of the earls of Meath.

Equally unsuccessful was archbishop Browne, notwithstanding his zeal for the cause of reform, in endeavouring to secure for himself a share of this religious plunder. On the first rumour of the coming of the commission, he wrote to request of lord Cromwell, that he would obtain for him a "very poor house of friars," as he describes it, named the New Abbey,—a "house of the obstinates' religion, which lay very commodious for him by Ballymore." This monastery, however, had already been given away, and,—still more provokingly, in the eyes of the prelate,—had been bestowed upon an Irishman.‡ He next endeavoured to obtain from Cromwell a grant of the nunnery of Grace Dieu, should that house be among the number of those suppressed. But here again his suit was fruitless; and after an ineffectual attempt to preserve it, this nunnery was suppressed, along with the rest, and its site and possessions granted, in the year 1541, to sir Patrick Barnwell, ancestor of the lord Trimleston.§

Some over-zealous Irish writers, unwilling to admit that so long an interval of peace and tolerance could have been enjoyed thus under a government almost entirely English, have brought forth one alleged instance of religious martyrdom, in the person of Dr. John Travers, an Irish secular priest, who published a book in defence of the papal supremacy. Had it been for writing this controversial work that capital punishment was inflicted on Travers, his right to the place he holds in the Irish martyrology could not have been questioned. But this was by no means the case:—he had taken a most active part in lord Thomas Fitz Gerald's rebellion, and it was for this offence that, having been tried and found guilty of treason, he was executed at Tyburn.‖ Such is the single alleged instance of severe punishment, on account of religion, which, even by those most desirous to fix such a charge on the Irish government, could be referred to during the whole of the thirteen years that elapsed from the first introduction of the reformed creed, to the last days of this reign.

The notion prevailing at this time among the alarmists of the Pale, and since adopted by all our historians, that religion was a leading motive of the late league among the chiefs, appears to be but little sustained by recorded facts. Had any great zeal for the interests of religion been felt, either within or without the Pale, there would have been, on both sides, more show of energy and character, but, on neither much enjoyment of tolerance or peace. So little, indeed, did Henry's spiritual claims alarm the consciences of the native chiefs, that, a year or two after, when entering into articles of submission, all the most eminent among them readily took the oath, acknowledging the king supreme head of the church. While thus, from pliancy of conscience, or, perhaps, mere ignorance of the nature of the pledge required from them, these lords contributed, by their easy submission, to prolong the tranquillity that now prevailed, the same object was, in like manner, ministered to by another large class of persons,—the unreformed clergy of the

* Gray, &c. to Crumwell. "As for the name of honour of the erledome of Ormond, it is not hurtefull they have it; but as for the landes, our advise is, the king departe not wyth them, but, in the lue thereof, geve them the abbaye of Duske, with thappertenaunces, wych is determined to be suppressed."—*S. P.* CLXVIII.

† J. Alen to Crumwell. "Considering that I have no howse in Dublin to lie in, neither provision to keep oon hors ther for my self, that it would plese your lordship that I maie have the monastery of St. Thomas Court to ferme, wherby I shalbe the more able to serve the king, and yit his grace nothing hindered of his profit."—State Papers, CCLXVIII.

‡ "Where as I wrote unto your lordeschip for the obteynement of a very poure house of friars, named the New Abbay, an house of the obstynates religion, which lay very commodious for me by Ballymore, to repaire unto in tymes of nede; I am clene dispatched of any plesaures there, and the profeite theireof gyven to an Irish man; so that I am compted an unworthie parson."—State Papers, CCXXVI. He then solicits in the same strain, for a grant of the abbey of Grace Dieu.

§ See, for particulars of this grant, Archdall's *Monast. Hibern.* p. 218.

‖ Cox.—Ware's *Writers*

Pale; who, when they found that by preaching in defence of the pope, they would incur the penalty of præmunire, refrained from preaching altogether, and gladly took refuge in the safe, though inglorious, policy of silence.* A similar course was pursued by the ill-fated lord Leonard Gray himself; and, accordingly, though known to be, in his heart, attached to the ancient doctrines, no charge against him on the score of religion appears in the articles upon which he was impeached.

It may be thought that the frequent "hostings" of the lord deputy, throughout the kingdom, seem rather at variance with the picture of general quiet here presented. But it must be recollected, that these circuits, or progresses, were meant for the display, rather than the employment, of military force,—more as precautionary measures of police than as movements of actual warfare: and the bloodless result of most of the journeys of this description, under lord Gray, serves much to corroborate all that has been said of the state of peace that generally prevailed.

Another striking proof of this fact may be found in the cessation, to a remarkable degree, of that petty warfare of the Irish septs among themselves, which had, from time immemorial, been the habit and curse of the land. The single exception, indeed, to the respite which, even in this respect, the whole kingdom now enjoyed, is found in the instance of an Anglo-Irish sept, the Geraldines, of whom, in a letter already cited, from the lord deputy to Cromwell, it is said, "the bastard Geraldines are, by the permission of God, killing one another." In general, however, there prevails in the public correspondence of this period, most ample testimony to the state of quiet which the whole country then could boast. Thus, in the year 1538, there occur such admissions, with respect to the state of the kingdom, as the following:—"We are at peace with all men, and they keep peace with us, as yet."—"We signify unto your majesty (say the lords of the council) that, thanks be to God and your highness, the land is at such stay and peace, at this season, as it hath not been these many years." But a still more satisfactory evidence of the existence and effects of this change is afforded by another official authority.—"This country was in no such quiet these many years; for, throughout the land, in a manner, it is peace, both with English and Irish. I never did see, in my time, so great resort to the law as there is this term, which is a good sign of quiet and obedience."†

The escape of young Gerald into France had removed the only common rallying-point or standard around which could be collected a sufficient number of male-contents to endanger seriously the peace of the country. Shortly after this youth's departure, lord Leonard Gray, who had long been entreating of the king permission to return to England, was granted a temporary recall, and sir William Brereton was appointed lord justice during his absence.‡ The mutual ill-will so long existing between the late deputy and the earl of Ormond, though for a short time apparently suppressed, had again broken out with fresh bitterness; and the enmity of Ormond to lord Leonard had found ready and sympathizing abettors in the lord chancellor Alen, and sir William Brabazon, the vice-treasurer. In the ominous summons, therefore, of these three personages to confront him in England, Gray must have seen but too sure a foretoken of the disastrous fate that there awaited him. A. D. 1540.

On the first rumour of Gray's recall, indications of revolt had begun to show themselves among the septs immediately bordering on the Pale.§ The O'Tooles of Wicklow had made a foray into the marches of Dublin, and the Cavanaghs a predatory inroad of the same kind into the county of Wexford. But, when not only this lord, but the earl of Ormond also, had sailed for England, the removal from the country of two such commanders inspired a confidence in some of the more restless of the chiefs, which seemed, for a short time, to threaten disturbance to the public peace. A sudden incursion made by O'Connor, for purposes of plunder, into Kildare,‖ and suspected plots and some threatening movements on the part of O'Neill, were the only grounds as yet assigned for the apprehension that generally prevailed.

It was clearly the policy of the new lord justice's government to make the worst of the state in which Gray had left the kingdom, in order, by bringing thus heavier odium upon his measures, to enhance proportionably their own merit in repairing the evils which he had caused. A desire to enter into negotiation having been intimated by O'Neill, the

* "So that now," says an observer of these events, "what for fear they have to preche their ould traditions, and the little or no good-will they have to preche the veritie, all is put to scilence."—J. White to Crumwell, State Papers, CCXII.

† Thomas Alen to Crumwell, State Papers, CCLVII.

‡ King Henry VIII. to Gray and Sir W. Brereton, *S. P.* CCXCV.

§ The Council of Ireland to Crumwell, Earl of Essex, *S. P.* CCXCVII.

‖ "Ochonor, notwithstanding his appointment of truce, assone as he perceived that the late lord deputie was passed the sea, on Tuysdaie last, his sonnes and cumpany invaded the countie of Kildare."—Alen and Brabazon to the Earl of Essex, *S. P.* CCCI.

lord justice appointed a meeting with him at Carrick Bradogh, a plain on the borders of Dundalk. But the chief, fearing, for some reason not explained by him, to trust himself with any Englishman at that place, proposed that the parley between them should be held at the Narrow Water, near M'Gennis's castle. Accordingly, a peace was there concluded with him to the same effect as that which, in the year 1535, he had made by indentures with sir William Skeffington.* But, in the present instance, we are furnished with proof that O'Neill's voluntary pledges of peace were by no means sincere; as a letter, still extant, addressed to him by James V. of Scotland, shows that at this very time the chief's secretary was at the Scottish court, negotiating with that monarch.†

Whatever hopes of aid from Scotland might have been counted upon by the Irish leaders,—and a close intercourse had long been held by them with that kingdom,—to the lord justice and council they spoke only the language of submission and peace. A general muster, however, of the respective forces of O'Donnell, O'Neill, O'Brian, and the other leading Irish lords, having been appointed to take place at Fowre, in the west of Meath, the lord justice assembled instantly a large army, comprising, in addition to the whole of the military power of the Pale, the attendance likewise of the lords spiritual and temporal, as well as of the judges, learned men, and priests; and at the head of this large and miscellaneous army, marched forth to the scene of the threatened congress.‡ All that the chiefs professed, from the first, to have in view, in this general confederacy, was the holding a parley with the lord justice and council, and making a peace such as would be likely to endure. But, when they now heard of the immense force the authorities of the Pale were bringing against them, and of the campaign of twenty days, for which they were victualled, the object of their own assemblage, whatever it might have been, was immediately abandoned, and none of them appeared at the place appointed. "Whereupon," says the lord justice, in relating the circumstance, "we concluded to do some exploit;" and, accordingly, they entered into O'Connor's country, and there, "encamping in sundry places, destroying his habitations, corns, and fortlaces, as long as their victuals endured."§

After this short interruption, our records continue to present, through the remainder of Henry's reign, a scene of mutual reconciliation, tolerance, and peace. Instead of the hostility so long and preposterously kept alive between the crown and its Irish subjects, conciliatory advances were now, for the first time, and almost simultaneously, made by both; and while the king, by a skilful distribution of honours and gifts, allured the principal Irish chieftains to his court, these lords, on their parts, showed even too courtier-like a compliance with all the conditions and pledges required of them in return.

The earl of Desmond, who, like most of the other magnates of the Pale, had become identified, from habit and policy, with the native nobility of the land, was one of the first who now showed a disposition to sue for pardon and favour. In the month of A. D. 1540. April, an act of assassination had been committed, of which the brother of this lord, Maurice Fitz John, was the perpetrator; and James Fitz Maurice, the rival claimant of the earldom of Desmond, was the victim.‖ The immediate consequence of this daring murder—and, therefore, liable to be supposed its motive—was the concentration in James Fitz John, the present lord, of the whole title to the earldom. No suspicion, however, appears to have been entertained that he was at all accessory to the crime; and his now uncontested high station, added to the weight of his personal influence, rendered the course likely to be taken by him an object of much speculation with both parties. One of the principal causes hitherto of his disaffection to the king's government had been the grudge borne by him to lord James Butler, now earl of Ormond, both on account of the ancient feud between their bloods, and also of the claim set up by Butler to the earldom of Desmond, in right of his wife, the only daughter and heir general of the eleventh earl of that house. This jealous feeling had now subsided, it appears, on both sides; and so anxious was Ormond, whose zeal and activity in the public service never flagged, to draw his brother earl to allegiance, that, when on his way to a parley with O'Brian, he so far trusted himself in Desmond's power as to lodge two nights in his dominion, for the purpose of endeavouring, as he says, to win him over "by familiarity and

* Brereton to Essex, *S. P.* CCCII.

† Epistolæ Jac. IV., Jac. V., et Mariæ, Regum Scot.

‡ Mathew King to the Privy Council in England, *S. P.* CCCX. See also Letter from Robert Cowley to the Duke of Norfolk, in Ellis's *Original Letters*, vol. ii. Second Series, written evidently at this time.

§ Lord Justice and Council to Henry VIII., *S. P.* CCCXIV. The lord justice adds, as if surprised that this course of proceeding had not been agreeable to the chief, "Albeit he remaineth in his cankerde malyce and rankor, and so doo all his confederates."

‖ The Council of Ireland to Henry VIII., *S. P.* CCXCVI.

persuasion." But Desmond, though conscious of his own offences, and most anxious to obtain pardon, was yet unwilling to relinquish his amity with O'Brian and others of the chiefs; and declared that so strong were their confederacies, he could not, even if it was his wish, attempt to resist them.

In the month of August, sir Antony Sentleger, the new lord deputy, reached Dublin; and his first report of the state of the country, addressed to the king soon after his arrival, refers to the peaceful dispositions manifested by O'Connor, O'Neill, O'Donnell, and other northern chiefs; as well as by O'Brian, Desmond, and other great lords of the west. O'Donnell had previously written to the king, acknowledging his spiritual supremacy, professing, in the humblest terms, repentance for his own offences, and suing earnestly for pardon.* By O'Neill, likewise, a respectful letter was addressed, in Latin, to the monarch, accompanied by some gifts, which Henry graciously received.† Far less dependent in his tone than O'Donnell, this chief, while professing himself disposed to proffer submission to the king, complains of the grievous extortions practised by his deputies, as well as of their constant wars and forays, which render it impossible, he declares, for peace to exist in the kingdom. To O'Donnell the king readily granted pardon; but, in answering O'Neill, though considerate and gracious in his language, he gives him to understand that farther favours must all depend upon his own deserts; and, referring to a request made rather prematurely in O'Neill's letter, for the grant of some lands and ruined castles on the north coast, Henry intimates, with no small address, that the favour solicited by him is rather postponed than refused.‡

The reduction of the sept of the Cavenaghs,§ which had been begun some months before by the earl of Ormond, was now, under the auspices of the new lord deputy, carried more fully into effect. After wasting and burning their country for the space of ten days,—the usual preliminary to Irish negotiation,—the invaders succeeded in bring Mac Morough, the head of the Cavenaghs, to make his submission. Renouncing, on his own part, the title of Mac Morough, he engaged also, on the part of his sept, that they would never more, after that day, elect any one from among themselves to bear that title, or act as their ruler, excepting only his majesty the king, and such as he should appoint. Measures of a similar kind were then taken with the sons of O'Moore, who held the county of Ley; and also with several other petty chiefs, such as O'Doyne, O'Dempsey, and Mac Maurice, who had all been confederates with O'Connor, but were now detached from his party.

O'Connor himself, whose restless spirit and near neighbourhood to the Pale had rendered him a thorn in the side of the English,‖ was now the only native lord to whom hopes of favour had not been held forth. So much excluded was he from the royal grace, that, in a letter addressed by the king to the Irish council, he desires that on no account, unless from actual necessity, they should enter into any terms with him; but rather, if possible, "expel him utterly from his country:" the king adding, that in this case, he would not be unwilling to bestow that country upon Cahir O'Connor, the chief's brother, on condition that he would "leave the Irish fashions," pay obedience to the English laws, and conform himself and those under his rule to the manners and usages of the Pale.¶ However willingly this chief would have continued his harassing warfare, had he been seconded by the other great captains, his solitary defiance of the king's government would, he knew, be entirely fruitless. Already, with the view of crushing him, the lord deputy had proclaimed a "hosting" into his territory, with store of provisions for a campaign of fourteen days. O'Connor saw clearly, therefore, that the only way to preserve his possessions, or even his life, was to follow the example of his fellow toparchs, and submit to the mercy of the crown. The news of his intention to proffer submission came the more welcome to the government, as saving the cost of the threatened expedition, which the state of the exchequer at this time but ill could bear.** The council con-

* State Papers, CCCIX.

† O'Neill to King Henry VIII., *S. P.* CCCXIII. The signature of this letter is as follows:—"Per me Capitaneum Oneyell, virum in omnibus subditum."

‡ State Papers, CCCXXI.

§ This sept, or nation, inhabited Idrone, in the west part of Carlow.

‖ "Occhonor, root of all mischief," says the lord justice, in one of his despatches to the king.—*State Papers*, CCCXIV.

¶ State Papers, CCCXIX.

** The financial resources of the Irish government were, at all times, scanty and precarious; and Davies tells us that, in all the most ancient pipe-rolls, the report of the state of the exchequer is invariably, "In Thesauro nil." Even in the reign of Henry VIII., so much was the Irish exchequer neglected, that (as appears from a letter of Cowley to the duke of Norfolk) it was destitute even of Books of the Revenue.—See Ellis's *Original Letters*, vol. ii. Second Series, letter cxxvi.

sented, therefore, to accept his own proposition, which was, that he should fulfil his former covenants, as agreed upon by indentures; and shortly after, his principal adherents, O'Mulmoy, O'Mulloghlin, and Mac Geoghegan, made their submission in like manner.*

In a parliament appointed to be held at the beginning of this year, but which did not meet till the 13th of June, an act was passed, which had been suggested more than A. D. 1541. once in the course of this reign, conferring on Henry and his successors the title of king of Ireland. This measure was adopted in consequence of a notion said to be prevalent among the natives, that the regal dominion of the kingdom of Ireland was vested in the pope for the time being; and that from him the king of England held the lordship of that realm. It was therefore hoped that Henry's adoption of the royal title would disabuse the Irish chieftains of their error, and lead them to acknowledge with less hesitation his paramount dominion.

But there had now opened upon them a prospect, not merely of mercy, but of favours and honours, at the hands of royalty which wanted no farther inducement to draw them in that direction; and, throughout the remaining years of this reign, little else is left to the historian than to pass in review the different chiefs who, with an almost lavish generosity, were in the same breath pardoned and rewarded, and some of whose names still stand memorials of this truly princely policy, among the most shining and honourable titles of the Irish peerage.

In the instance of a wild mountain chief, named Tirlogh O'Toole, this course of policy was attended with circumstances not unworthy of notice. The sept of the O'Tooles, whose territory bordered on the marches of Dublin, had been, to a greater degree than many even of the more powerful septs, a source of annoyance and terror to the English Pale. Occupying the mountainous parts of the county of Wicklow, their only habitations were the wood and the morass, their only fortresses, the deep glens and mountain-passes. The reigning chief, however, Tirlogh O'Toole, combined with the ferocity of a border ravager much of that generous sense of honour by which the rude heroes of chivalry were distinguished; and, on one occasion, when all the great Irish lords, O'Neill, O'Donnell, O'Connor, and others, had leagued to invade the English Pale, Tirlogh sent word to the lord deputy, that, seeing the principal chiefs were now all combined against him, he, Tirlogh, thought it but fair to be on his side; but, "as soon as the others made peace, then would he alone make war with him." This chivalrous promise the chief faithfully kept; nor was it till O'Donnell, O'Neill, and others, had made their submission and withdrawn, that Tirlogh, summoning forth his wild followers from their mountain-holds, renewed, fiercely as before, his harassing inroads on the English borders.†

Even to this rude and houseless warrior, the conciliatory influence of the royal policy had now found its way. Requesting a parley with the lord deputy, he asked for permission to repair to England to see the king, "of whom he had heard so much honour," and likewise to present to him an humble petition for some lands to which he laid claim. Wisely entering into what he knew to be the royal wishes, the lord deputy acceded to this request; supplied him with 20*l.* from his own purse towards his expenses, and gave him likewise a recommendatory letter to the duke of Norfolk, who was then universally regarded as the warm friend and patron of Irish interests. It was also suggested that the castle of Powerscourt, which stood upon a part of the lands claimed by this chief, should be granted to him by the king.

The earl of Desmond, having at length consented to make his submission, acquainted the lord deputy and council that he was ready, on hostages being given, to repair to the borders of Cashel for that purpose. He had demanded that the earl of Ormond should be given in pledge for him; but to this the lord deputy would not agree; and the hostages whom he sent instead, were the archbishop of Dublin, the master of the ordnance, and his own brother. Among other articles of this submission, which was signed and sealed at sir Thomas Butler's house, at Cahir, Desmond agreed to renounce, for himself and his heirs for ever, the singular privilege claimed by his ancestors, of never appearing at any parliament, nor entering into any walled town. To get rid of the variance between him and Ormond respecting the title of the earldom of Desmond, it was agreed

* The Council of Ireland to King Henry VIII., S. P. CCCXXIII.

† "And although it shall appear to your majesty that this Thirrolough is but a wretched person, and a man of no grete power, neither having house to put his hedd in, nor yet money in his purse to by him a garment, yet may he well make 2 or 3 hundred men.—Assuring your highness that he hath doon more hurte to your English Pale then any man in Irlande, and woll do, whensoever he shall not aither be clerely banished or restored to your hieghnes favours, wherby he may be bound to serve your majestie, as we thinke verely he woll do."—The Lord Deputy and Council to Henry VIII., S. P. CCCXXIX. p. 367., *note*.

that a cross-marriage should take place between their children; and each bound himself to the other in the sum of 4000*l.* to see this engagement performed. Both Sentleger and the lord chancellor then accompanied Desmond to the town of Kilmalloch, a place where no deputy of the king had set his foot for a hundred years before. Here the earl most hospitably entertained them, taking occasion, during the few days they passed with him, to give such able and valuable counsel for the reformation of Ireland, as filled these two lords with admiration; and in a letter to the king from Sentleger, recounting the transactions just mentioned, the once dangerous, perverse, and outlawed Desmond is described as "undoubtedly a very wise and discreet gentleman." Accordingly, without even waiting the royal sanction, he was sworn a member of the king's council.*

From Kilmalloch the lord deputy proceeded to the city of Limerick, and there, assisted by the earl of Ormond, held a parley with O'Brian, in order to prevail upon that chief to proffer his obedience.† But O'Brian answered, that he must take more time to consult his kinsmen and followers, adding, with a view of the matter somewhat more constitutional than Henry's ministers were accustomed to, that, "although the captain of his nation, he was still but one man." The principal complaints he had now to make against the king's government were, that they prevented him from building his bridge across the Shannon, and had likewise deprived him of all that authority over the natives inhabiting the eastern side of the river, which his predecessors had invariably exercised.‡ To this the lord deputy answered, that rather than allow him to obtain either of these objects, he himself would continue at war with him as long as it pleased the king to permit him.

In the parliament that assembled at Dublin, in the month of June, there were present, together with the earls of Ormond and Desmond, a great number of Anglo-Irish lords who had not, for many years before, attended in their places. Among these were the lord Barry, the lord Roche, the lord Fitz Maurice, and also lord Bermingham of Athenry. But a far more remarkable feature of this opening of the houses of parliament was the attendance there of the procurators, or attorneys, of O'Brian, and also, in their own proper persons, of the chiefs Cavanagh, O'Moore, O'Reilly, Mac William, and others, to whom, to their great satisfaction, the speeches delivered by the lord chancellor and the speaker were interpreted by the earl of Ormond in their own language. On this occasion, too,—as Sentleger, in describing to the king the ceremonies of the day, informs him,—O'Reilly, the chief of East Brefney, appeared in the dress which his majesty had given him.§

The bill conferring upon the monarch the title of king of Ireland was passed by both houses, with the most joyous unanimity; and the Sunday following was a day of general rejoicing. The lords and gentlemen all went in procession to St. Patrick's church, where a solemn mass was sung by the archbishop of Dublin: after which the act was proclaimed in the presence of 2000 persons, and a grand Te Deum concluded the ceremony. Still more to gratify the public feeling, the king issued a proclamation for a general pardon. "There were made in the city," says the lord deputy, "great bonfires, wine was set in the streets, and there were great feastings in the houses."‖

About a fortnight before the date of these memorable transactions, lord Leonard Gray, the victim, unjustly as it appears, of an official cabal, was publicly executed, as a traitor, on Tower Hill. The recorded charges against him, at once numerous and frivolous, evince the desire, far more than the power, to substantiate actual guilt. His family connexions, both with the Geraldines, and with some of the leading chiefs, had given him a hold on the hearts of the Irish, which excited the jealousy doubtless of Ormond, and was one of the main sources of the hatred with which that lord so long pursued him. Even in the articles of accusation, Gray's popularity is made one of the leading charges; and it is alleged against him, as an act degrading to his royal master, that he had passed through the heart of Thomond into Connaught, without any other guard than a single galloglass of O'Brian's, bearing an axe before him. Another charge, founded evidently on mere surmise and rumour, shows sufficiently the spirit that actuated his accusers. It is intimated, rather than alleged, that the king's artillery had been left by him at Galway, that it might be ready there for the bishop of Rome, or the Spaniards, in case they should land in those parts; and a report, it is added, was then prevalent, that cardinal Pole, young Gerald's uncle, was soon to arrive there with a large army.¶ Such was the

* Sentleger to King Henry VIII., S. P. CCCXXXIV.

† Ibid. "Ther we taryed 8 dales, as well to pacefie sartan matters of variance depending among the citezins ther, as also to parle with Obrian, who is the gretest Irisheman of the west of this lande."

‡ Donough O'Brian, in the year 1543, petitioned for the captainship of this district.—"Item, he desireth the landes and captainship of Onaght, on this syde the water of Shynlayn, which in times past he and his ancestors had."—Requests of O'Brian, &c., S. P. CCCXCIII.

§ Sentleger to Henry VIII., *S. P.* CCCXL. ‖ Ibid.

¶ The council of Ireland's Articles against Lord Leonard Gray, S. P. CCCXXVI.

weak absurd character of most of the charges upon which this brave and active officer was condemned to so unworthy a death.*

But the gracious example set by the monarch had diffused a far more mild and liberal spirit through every branch of the administration; and the numerous candidates for court favour that were now emerging from their long outlawed haunts found all a most ready and zealous promoter of their several suits in the present popular lord deputy. To him, indeed, and the council, appears to have been chiefly left the selection of those individuals upon whom dignities and grants of lands were to be bestowed. Among the more humble requests transmitted through him, there are a few which, however homely in their nature, let in more light on the social condition of the Irish dynasts of that period than could ever be collected from such merely public events as form the whole and sole materials of our general history. Thus, we find a request made by Desmond,—"the noblest man in all the realm,"—that the king would provide him with robes to wear in parliament, and likewise with apparel for his daily use, "whereof" "he hath great lack." Sentleger himself, who states the circumstance, had already given this earl a gown, jacket, doublet, hose, and other articles of dress, for which he was very thankful, and wore in all places where he accompanied the lord deputy.† For his want of means to provide these necessaries, Desmond accounted by the wasting wars in which he had been engaged. Mac Gilpatrick, also, who shortly after was created baron of Upper Ossory, and O'Reilly, who was to be made viscount of Cavan, were provided, in like manner, with robes for parliament by the king; while the chief O'Rourke, who is described as "a man somewhat gross, and not trained to repair unto his majesty," made petition only for a suit of ordinary apparel.

There is yet another incident worth mentioning, as showing curiously the state of society at that period. Two of the Geraldine lords of Munster, the lord Roche and the White Knight, having, by their constant quarrels and inroads, entirely wasted each other's territories, the king sent orders to the earl of Desmond to take them both into custody. They were accordingly, seized and imprisoned in Dublin castle, "where," says the lord deputy, in stating the particulars to the king, "they now agree very well together, lying both in one bed; although, before, they could not agree in a country of forty miles' length between them." He adds,—"I purpose they shall there remain till their amity be better confirmed, and then, God willing, I intend to send them home free, apparelled like Englishmen; for at present they are in their saffron shirts and kernoghe's coats."‡

When to this picture of the life and manners of the higher ranks, of both races, at this period, we add that the great O'Neill himself was so unlettered as to be unable to write his name,§ there needs no farther or stronger evidence of the embruting effects of the policy of the Pale, and the sort of frightful retribution by which it debased as well the rulers as the ruled.

Though the chiefs had become, in general, so well disposed to the English crown, there were still two, and those the most powerful of the whole body, O'Neill and O'Donnell, who continued for some time, to hold off; and no less‖ by their example than by the mighty means of mischief which they possessed, threatened to disturb the now dawning prospects of peace. Such was the influence, indeed, of those two dynasts, that it was thought unsafe to make any reduction in the king's army as long as they continued to withhold their submission. At length, O'Donnell, who appears to have been led to adopt his course by feelings of friendship, as well as relationship, towards O'Neill,‖ announced his intention to give in his submission; and even promised, should his brother chief not follow his example to assist the lord deputy against him.

After some efforts made in vain, as well by O'Donnell as the government to bring O'Neill to a parley, he was, at last, by the more effective means of an inroad or two into his territory, induced to proffer obedience; and, though he appears to have been but little relied upon, yet so prompt was now the flow of royal favour in this direction, that A. D. 1542. the king, in the following year, at Greenwich, created him earl of Tyrone, and his son, lord Duncannon. His own ambition had been to obtain the title of earl

* Among these numerous items of charge, which amount in all to ninety, we find the following, founded on the old Irish custom of gossipred: "20.—After this, was my said lord made gossope to Oneill, whiche in Ireland is the grettist friendship accepted amonges men."

Through the whole of these ninety articles of accusation, not a single allusion is made to any act of sacrilege supposed to have been committed by Gray, either at Down, Galway, or elsewhere; so that for these idle tales, repeated from historian to historian, no other authority is to be found than the dull fabler Stanihurst.

† Sentleger to Henry VIII., *S. P.* CCCXXXIV. ‡ Id. *S. P.* CCCXCIV.

§ See O'Neill's Submission, signed with his mark, S. P. CCCLXXIX. Also Mac Gilpatrick's, signed in the same manner, *S. P.* CCCXXXVI.

‖ O'Donnell's first wife was O'Neill's sister.

of Ulster; but this the king peremptorily refused, expressing his wonder that O'Neill, who had so often and grieviously offended, should think of asking the name and honour of Ulster, one of the great earldoms of Christendom, and the king's proper inheritance.

The accession of O'Donnell to the ranks of the loyal was hailed with welcome by the government; and, even before the adhesion of O'Neill, we find Cusacke, the speaker of the Irish house of commons, proudly boasting that, as long as O'Brian, O'Donnell, Mac William, and the earl of Desmond, were true to the king, there was nothing to be feared from all the rest of Ireland.

A few particulars respecting O'Donnell, which occur in a letter from the lord deputy, would lead us to conclude that, in point of civilization, he was somewhat advanced beyond the generality of his brother chiefs. In recommending that parliament robes should be bestowed upon him, Sentleger adds that in other apparel he is better furnished than any other Irishman; and then proceeds to describe his dress:—a coat of crimson velvet with aiglets of gold, twenty or thirty pair; over that, a great double cloak of crimson satin bordered with black velvet, and in his bonnet a feather set full of aiglets of gold. He was attended by his chaplain, a learned young man, brought up in France, for whom Sentleger, in the year 1544, asked and obtained of the king, the presentation to the bishopric of Elphin. O'Donnell's wish was to be made earl of Sligo or of Tyrconnel; and the latter was the title granted, but not until the year 1603.

To indulge farther in this sort of detail, respecting the numerous other objects of royal favour, who were selected for promotion and ennoblement from among the ancient lords of the land, would, however interesting, even in an historical point of view, usurp more space than the prescribed limits of this work allow. I shall therefore enumerate briefly the names of the other chiefs and lords who were now selected as the primary materials of an Anglo-Irish Peerage. Morough O'Brian, whose constant encroachments on the country eastward of the Shannon had kept the government of the Pale in continual alarm, was created earl of Thomond for life, with the dignity of baron of Inchiquin descendible to his heirs male; while Donough, his nephew, as a reward for his unvarying attachment to the English, was made baron of Ibrackan, and, after the decease of his uncle, earl of Thomond, for life. On another equally active chief, O'Connor, there had been, as early as the year 1537, some intention of bestowing the title of baron of Offaley. But, though, at a later period, the king gave formally his assent to this grant, it was never carried into effect. A. D. 1543.

Mac William Eighter, of Clanricarde, the captain of the Anglo-Irish clan of the De Burghs, had, on the deposition of the former Mac William by lord Leonard Gray, been raised to that name and seigniory, in his place. This lord was, by the natives, called *Negan*, or the beheader, from his having constructed a mound of the heads of men slain in battle, and then covered it over with earth. On making his submission, early in the year 1541, he had petitioned the crown for a grant, or rather restoration, of the earldom heretofore enjoyed by his family; and also a confirmation, by letters patent, of all the possessions which had descended to him by inheritance. It was supposed that he had himself counted upon being made earl of Connaught; but against this the council strongly gave their advice, reminding his majesty that the province of Connaught formed a fifth part of his Irish dominions. It was therefore fixed that he was to be created earl of Clanricarde, and baron of Dunkellin, while his fellow-chieftain and relative, Mac Gill Patrick, was to be made baron of Upper Ossory.

Meanwhile O'Neill, who, although the last to tender his allegiance, was the very first to hasten to avail himself of its fruits, had set sail, accompanied by Hugh O'Cervallan, bishop of Clogher, for England; and waiting upon the king at Greenwich, made a surrender to him of all his territory, and agreed to renounce the name of O'Neill. A few days after, both name and estates were regranted to him, by letters patent, together with the title of earl of Tyrone.* A. D. 1542.

In the following year, in the queen's closet at Greenwich, which was "richly hung with cloth of arras, and well strewed with rushes," for the occasion, took place the ceremony of creating O'Brian earl of Thomond, and conferring upon Mac William—or, as he had been styled since his submission, lord Fitz William—the name and honour of earl of Clanricarde. At the same time, Donough O'Brian, who was attended, as were probably all the other lords, by an interpreter, was made baron of A. D. 1543.

* Henry VIII. to the Lord Deputy and Council. After announcing this creation, the king adds:—"And for his reward, We gave unto him a chayne of threescore poundes and odde, We payed for his robes, and the charges of his creation, threescore and fyve poundes tenne shillinges two pens, and We gave him in redy money oon hundreth poundes sterling.—*S. P.* CCCLXXXI.

Ibrackan. By a very thoughtful act of munificence, the king granted also to each of these noblemen a house and lands, near Dublin, for the keeping of their retinues and horses, whenever they resorted thither to attend parliaments and councils.*

There being, at the time of their visit to England, an almost total want of sterling money in Ireland, the lord deputy in providing them with the means of defraying their expenses, lent to O'Brian the sum of 100*l.* in half groats. A similar loan, attended by circumstances yet more homely, was advanced to the lord of Tyrone. This chief, being likewise in want of money, to defray the charges of his visit to court, was provided by Sentleger, who had himself borrowed the sum from merchants of Dublin, with 200 marks sterling; the debt to be repaid, according to the fashion of primitive times, in cattle to that amount.†

In allowing full credit to the English monarch for the mild and tolerant character of his policy towards Ireland, it must, at the same time, be recollected, that the facility with which all the great Irish leaders agreed to reject the pope's supremacy, and acknowledge the king their spiritual head, removed all grounds for any such sanguinary persecution as raged at the same period on the other side of the Channel. Not content with his formal renouncement of Rome, O'Brian, in a paper entitled "The Irishmen's Requests,"‡ demanded that "there should be sent over some well-learned Irishmen, brought up in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, not being infected with the poison of the bishop of Rome, and that having been first approved by the king's majesty, they should then be sent to preach the word of God in Ireland." The Irish lords, too, following the example of the more cultivated grandees of England, readily allowed themselves to be consoled for whatever sacrifice they had made in deserting their ancient faith, by the rich share they gained of the plunder which the confiscation of its venerable establishments afforded.§ One of the requests made by O'Brian, previously to visiting the English court, was, that the grant he had received from the Irish council, of certain abbeys, lately suppressed, should be confirmed to him by the king, with the addition also of a grant of the house of Observants, at Ennis. To Donough O'Brian was given the abbey of Ellenegrane, a small island in the mouth of the Shannon, together with the moiety of the abbey of Clare; and among the rewards of Mac Gill Patrick's new loyalty, were the house of the late friars of Haghevo and the suppressed monastery of Hagmacarte.‖

But, whatever may be thought of the conduct and motives of those individual chiefs who were now so readily converted from rebels into apostates and courtiers, the wise policy of the government, in thus diverting into a safe and legitimate channel the wild ambition of such powerful subjects, and producing, by conciliation, a state of peace which force and repression had vainly for ages endeavoured to effect, cannot be too highly praised, whether for its immediate effects, or the lasting and salutary example it left behind. Although to Henry himself, not merely as the source of all administrative authority, but as ever ready to afford his sanction to the liberal policy pursued in Ireland, no small share of the honour of that policy is due, undoubtedly to Sentleger belongs the far higher praise of originating this system of government, and continuing manfully, and even importunately, to press the adoption of it upon the king. So much was he aware indeed, of the extent to which he presumed on the royal patience, that, after soliciting in one of his letters some favour for Mac Gill Patrick, he adds,—"Thus do I always move your majesty to give. I most humbly beseech you of pardon, for I verily trust that your highness shall win more obedience with these small gifts, than perchance hath been won before this time, with 10,000*l.* spent." The king himself, though yielding to most of these requests with a degree of ductility and thoughtfulness not observable in any other acts of his later years, yet deemed it necessary to restrain a little the liberality of his deputy; and thus, in answering one of his letters, reproves the too ready ear lent by him to all sorts of suitors:—"Farther you shall understand, that we much marvel to see so many letters written from you in the recommendation of every man's suit that will desire

* "We have granted unto every of them, and their heires masles, summe house and pece of lande nere Dublyn, for the keping of their horses and traynes, at their repayre to our parlyaments and counsailles."—Henry VIII. to the Lord Deputy and Council, *S. P.* CCCXCVI.

† He hath promysed I shall have kiene for the same, and for that have sente his sonne and dyverse of your retynewe here to levie the same.—*S. P.* CCCLXXCIV.

‡ State Papers, CCCXCIII.

§ On the subject of the destruction of the religious houses, there are many, of all creeds, who would now join with the excellent Lord Herbert in "complaining of the loss of so many stately churches, dedicated to God's service;" for "although," he adds, "they may have abused the veil of religion, yet was that monastical life instituted according to the pious example of ancient Fathers, that they who found themselves unfit for the execution of worldly affairs (as many such there are) might in such voluntary retirement spend their days in divine writings or meditations.—*Hist. of the Life and Reign of Henry VIII.*

‖ Henry VIII. to the Lord Deputy, *S. P.* CCCXCVI.

the same. It shall be well done that, ere you write, you examine whether it be expedient for us to grant the suit or not."

Preparations being now on foot for a grand campaign in France, orders were sent by the king to the earl of Ormond, to furnish him speedily with a small troop of kerns, or Irish light infantry, to assist in the sieges of Boulogne or Montreuil. Shortly before, this earl had been commanded by his majesty to raise and equip a force of 3000 of these troops, whereof 1000 were to be sent immediately to the west marches of England, as well for the defence of the English borders as for the annoyance of the Scots; while the remaining 2000 were to be kept in such readiness, as, "upon short warning," to attend his royal person into France.* On considering, however, the danger of leaving Ireland to the risk of invasion, without an adequate number of troops for her defence, the king countermanded a part of this force, and desired that 1000 only should be sent; of which one half was to be forthwith despatched to the Pile of Fowdray, while the remainder were all to be in readiness to join him at an hour's notice. The kerns destined to serve in France were placed under the command of two nephews of the earl of Ormond,†—lord Poer and Piers Butler; the latter the second brother of the baron of Dunboyne.‡ According to the custom of the country, every two kerns were attended by a page or boy, to bear their mantles, weapons, and victuals. A. D. 1544.

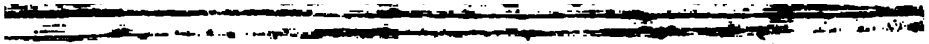
The praises bestowed on the gallant behaviour of this Irish corps, at the siege of Boulogne, may safely be credited, even though we should reject some of those marvellous stories with which the chronicler of this part of our history has laboured to enliven his task. According to this authority, such were the wild feats of courage performed by these kerns, that the French, astonished, sent an ambassador to inquire of Henry "whether he had brought with him men or devils."

It was not till the following year that the services of the Irish were required in the war against Scotland. A large army having been then collected on the Scottish borders, under the command of the earl of Hertford, it was intended that, while this nobleman invaded Scotland by land, there should be, at the same time, a naval descent on the western coast. To attain this latter object, the earl of Lennox, who had lately deserted the cause of his own country, and joined the English banner, entered into negotiations with Donald, the lord of the Isles; and this insular prince, agreeing readily to the terms proposed to him, passed over to Knockfergus, with a fleet of 180 galleys, having on board 4000 men. A. D. 1545.

Lennox himself, however, was still absent with the English army in Scotland; nor was it till late in the present year, that, seeing some hopes of being able to recover the castle of Dumbarton, he hastened to Ireland to take the command of the force provided for that object.§ Constant rumours of the return of Gerald, with foreign aid, had diffused excitement throughout the kingdom, and kept the government in a state of watchfulness and alarm. In the month of May, it was generally reported that Gerald was coming with a large army, from the coast of Britany, and meant to land among the Mac Carthys.‖ Some time after, the rumour ran that an expedition was then preparing at Brest, to convey the young Geraldine, with a force of 15,000 men, to the country of his kinsman, O'Donnell.¶ But an alarm, at a later period, to which even Sentleger attached some importance, represented Scotland as the quarter from whence this invasion was to be attempted.**

In the month of November, the squadron destined for the attack on Dumbarton set sail from Dublin, under the joint command of Lennox and Ormond; and how new was such an effort to the Irish authorities may be judged from the language in which Sentleger speaks of it:—"The thing is so rare, that there lacketh men of experience to set forth the same; for we think, this 200 years, so many men were not embarked and victualled here for so long time."†† All we know of the farther course of this costly armament is, that the object for which it sailed had been wholly frustrated, before its arrival on the coast of Scotland, by the gross treachery of Stirling, the constable.‡‡ How soon, or to what port, it returned, neither the Scottish nor Irish records inform us.

* The Privy Council of England to the Lord Justice and Council of Ireland, *S. P.* CCCCIII.
† Ormond to King Henry VIII., *S. P.* CCCCV.
‡ Sons of James, titular Lord Dunboyne, by Lady Joan Butler, daughter of Piers, Earl of Ormond.
§ Sentleger to the Privy Council in England, *S. P.* CCCCXXIV.
‖ The Lord Justice and Council to King Henry VIII., *S. P.* CCCCVII.
¶ Same to Same, *S. P.* CCCCVIII.
** Sentleger to the Council of England, *S. P.* CCCCXI.
†† The Lord Deputy and Council to King Henry VIII., *S. P.* CCCCXXVII.
‡‡ Tytler, *Hist. of Scotland*, vol. v. chap. 5.



PUBLISHED BY LEA & BLANCHARD;

Murray's Encyclopædia of Geography,

BROUGHT UP TO 1842.

PUBLISHED BY SUBSCRIPTION.

THE

ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF GEOGRAPHY:

COMPRISING

A COMPLETE DESCRIPTION OF THE EARTH,

PHYSICAL, STATISTICAL, COMMERCIAL, AND POLITICAL;

EXHIBITING

ITS RELATION TO THE HEAVENLY BODIES—ITS PHYSICAL STRUCTURE —THE NATURAL HISTORY OF EACH COUNTRY;

AND THE

INDUSTRY, COMMERCE, POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS, AND CIVIL AND SOCIAL STATE OF ALL NATIONS;

BY HUGH MURRAY F.R.S.E.

ASSISTED IN

ASTRONOMY, &c. BY PROF. WALLACE, GEOLOGY, &c. BY PROF. JAMESON, | BOTANY, &c. BY PROF. HOOKER, ZOOLOGY, &c. BY W. SWAINSON.

ILLUSTRATED BY EIGHTY-TWO MAPS,

And about Eleven Hundred other Engravings on Wood

Representing the most remarkable objects of Nature and Art in every region of the Globe;

TOGETHER WITH

A MAP OF THE UNITED STATES,

Drawn by Drayton, from Tanner's Map, and Engraved on Copper, in which is embodied the latest information relating to the Internal Improvements of this country.

REVISED, CORRECTED,

AND BROUGHT DOWN TO THE PRESENT PERIOD,

AND THE PORTION RELATING TO THE UNITED STATES WRITTEN ANEW,

BY T. G. BRADFORD,

In Three handsome Royal Octavo Volumes, various bindings.

Persons can be supplied by sending their names to the Publishers, or the general Agent,

G. W. GORTON.

PHILADELPHIA.

PUBLISHED BY LEA & BLANCHARD;

WALPOLE'S UNRIVALLED LETTERS:

THE ONLY COMPLETE EDITION.

THE

LETTERS OF HORACE WALPOLE,

EARL OF ORFORD,

CONTAINING

NEARLY THREE HUNDRED LETTERS,

Now first published from the originals, forming an uninterrupted series, from the year 1735 to 1797; containing his letters to George Montagu, Esq.; Sir Horace Mann; Richard West, Esq.; Lady Craven; Gray (the poet;) Hon. H. Seymour Conway; John Chute, Esq.; Sir David Dalrymple; Rev. William Mason; Lady Hervey; the Earl of Hertford; Richard Bentley, Esq.; Earl of Strafford; Mrs. Hannah More; David Hume, Esq., &c., &c., with a splendid Portrait of the Author, in Four beautiful Volumes.

"Besides its unrivalled beauty and brilliancy, the collection has the more important merit of being the liveliest picture of manners, and the best epitome of political history that not only this, but any country possesses."—*Quarterly Review.*

"No general collection of the letters of Horace Walpole has ever been made which will at all compare in fulness with the present work."—*North Am. Review.*

"Horace Walpole may decidedly claim preeminence for ease and liveliness of expression, terseness of remark, and felicity of narration above almost all the epistolary writers of Great Britain."—*Quarterly Review.*

"Walpole's Letters are full of wit, pleasantry, and information, and written with singular neatness and sprightliness."—*Edinburgh Review.*

"One of the most useful and important publication that has issued from the press for the last quarter of a century. It is illustrated with notes, drawn up with consummate tact. Such a work, so enriched with all that is necessary to render it complete, is one of the most valuable that any lover of sterling English literature can possess."—*Sun.*

"As a book of reference, this edition of Walpole's Letters must henceforth take its place among the memoirs and histories of the time. *As a book of gossip*, it is perhaps the completest work of the kind in the English language."—*The Times.*

"One of the very best works of its class, if not unique, in the English language; a work full of information, full of anecdote, and full of amusement; equally fit for the library of the scholar, the dilettante, the artist, the statesman, and the general reader."—*Literary Gazette.*

"Walpole's Letters are unequalled in our language; delightful in themselves, and a most amusing and instructive commentary on the history of parties, and of the country, from 1735 to 1797."—*Athenæum.*

"It is the only complete edition of the incomparable letters of this 'prince of epistolary writers,' as he has been justly called; and the letters themselves are arranged in chronological order."—*Dublin Evening Mail.*

"Those who have never yet read Horace Walpole's letters—and they must be still in their teens—have much enjoyment before them; those who are familiar with his style, including all who deserve to read, will here renew the pleasure they have so often experienced."—*Morning Herald.*

SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

PUBLISHED BY LEA & BLANCHARD;

COOPER'S NAVAL HISTORY;

A NEW EDITION.

A NAVAL HISTORY

OF

THE UNITED STATES,

BY J. FENIMORE COOPER, ESQ.

In Two handsome Volumes, bound in embossed cloth.

A new Edition, revised and corrected, with an Index to the volumes.

"If there was one man before all others, whom we could have selected for this task, that man was Mr. Cooper. In all things relative to the Navy he writes with enthusiasm. The ocean is his element. With the glorious career of the service in which his youth was passed, he takes a laudable pride, and he betrays in every page the earnest desire of his heart to make its merits known to the world. In dwelling upon the achievements of our young Navy, the pure American fire of his genius once more blazes out as brightly as ever. In the interest which he has thrown around the cruises and combats of our ships of war, we trace the master hand which drew the Pilot; nor will many chapters in this work yield in point of romantic interest to any of his sea-novels. Many of the naval actions of the Revolution, and especially the cruisings of Paul Jones, and the desperate fight between the Bon-Homme Richard and the Serapis, have all the richness of romance, with the method and accuracy of strict history."—*American Traveller.*

"The History of the Navy of the United States from the earliest period of its existence, in the dawn of the Revolution, through all its discouragements, reverses, trials, and glory, was a task worthy of the author, who had established a reputation, as a describer of nautical events, superior to that of any other living writer. The task has been so performed as to leave nothing to desire. No work of higher interest has been published in the United States for many years. The glories of American victories are fully portrayed, whilst, at the same time, care is taken, in every case, to exhibit a fair and impartial estimate of the strength and appointments of antagonists' vessels or fleets. In this way the work acquires the credit due to a grave and impartial history."—*Baltimore Chronicle.*

"We have perused this history with no little curiosity and with great interest. Considering the brief existence of the American marine, its annals are more eventful, more romantic, and more various, than any in existence. Nothing can surpass the energy which enabled the United States to form an effective navy, at a time when they could hardly be said to have had a political existence, and when they were beset by greater difficulties than any which an infant nation had ever yet to encounter. This consideration has animated the present historian, whose enthusiasm seems to be kindled by his office of chronicler, even more than when he formerly sought inspiration from the same source in constructing his famous stories of the sea. Altogether this history is a valuable one, and cannot fail to pass into universal circulation. The incidents which took place in the naval war with Tripoli, are grander and more heroic than any thing in the circle of romance, and are detailed with all the vigour and animation of Mr. Cooper's genius."—*British Naval and Military Magazine.*

SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

PUBLISHED BY LEA & BLANCHARD;

THE SPEECHES
OF
HENRY LORD BROUGHAM,
Upon Questions relating to Public Rights, Duties and Interests,
WITH HISTORICAL INTRODUCTIONS;

In Two handsome Volumes, bound in embossed cloth, or law sheep.

CONTENTS.

Military Flogging—Queen Caroline—Libel on the Durham Clergy—Dissertation on the Law of Libel—Commerce and Manufactures—Agricultural and Manufacturing Distress—Army Estimates—Holy Alliance—Slavery—Law Reform—Parliamentary Reform—Education—Poor Laws—Scotch Parliamentary and Burgh Reform—Scotch Marriage and Divorce Bill—Establishment of the Liverpool Mechanic's Institute—Speech on Neutral Rights—Affairs of Ireland—Speech at the Grey Festival—Change of Ministry in 1834—Business of Parliament—Maltreatment of the North American Colonies—Speech on the Civil List—Privilege of Parliament.

"The period embraced by these two volumes extends over a space of thirty years, from 1810 to 1840, a most exciting period, during all of which Mr. Brougham, or Lord Brougham, played a most distinguished part; and upon the character and events of which he exerted no mean influence.

"In brief, the biographical ligaments which bind together the subjects so ably handled in these volumes, impart compactness, strength, and beauty to the whole, and the head of a family who introduces such works to his sons and daughters, secures to them an inheritance which must endure to them for the whole period of existence."—*National Intelligencer.*

"Who does not desire to possess all the speeches of this great philanthropist on the subject of the poor laws, the education of the people, the law of libel, and other great topics of universal concernment? In the two large volumes before us, all these proud efforts of human learning, genius, and intellect, are embodied—each speech being preceded by a historical introduction of the occasion and circumstances under which it was delivered. No English library will be complete without these volumes."—*New York Commercial.*

"These volumes contain a mine of literary and political wealth strongly characteristic, both in manner and matter, of this great original genius. The independence, the vigour, the manliness of thought, which is here displayed, and the stores of wisdom and learning with which the volumes abound, cannot fail to secure for their author a more full appreciation than he has in this country especially enjoyed."—*Eclectic.*

THE ECCLESIASTICAL AND POLITICAL HISTORY
OF THE
POPES OF ROME,
DURING THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES,
BY LEOPOLD RANKE,
PROFESSOR IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN;

Translated from the German by Sarah Austin. In Two Volumes.

"To the high qualifications of profound research, careful accuracy, great fairness and candour, with a constant reference to the genius and spirit of each successive age, common to the historians of Germany, Mr. Ranke adds the charm of a singularly lucid, terse and agreeable style."—*Quarterly Review.*

SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

PUBLISHED BY LEA & BLANCHARD;

THE WORKS OF MRS. HEMANS,

COMPLETE;

INCLUDING A MEMOIR BY HER SISTER,

AND AN ESSAY ON HER GENIUS, BY MRS. SIGOURNEY.

A new and beautiful Edition, printed on fine paper, with a Portrait of the Authoress, handsomely bound in embossed cloth, or in calf and morocco, extra, with gilt edges, forming a beautiful and appropriate present for ladies; in 7 vols. royal 12mo.

This is the only complete edition of the works of Mrs. Hemans, and contains many new poems, together with other matter not embraced in any other edition of her works.

"Of the poems of Mrs. Hemans it is unnecessary for us to speak. They have been too long known, too much admired, and too widely circulated to need our commendation; but we must express gratitude to the publishers for the elegant and complete manner in which this edition is issued, and express the hope that it may be the fireside companion of all who love nature and a pure unaffected expression of the kindest affection of a heart imbued with the pure love which springs from true religion."—*Boston Times.*

A Third Edition of the Biography and Poetical Remains

OF THE LATE

MARGARET MILLER DAVIDSON,

BY WASHINGTON IRVING;

In One Volume, handsomely bound in embossed cloth.

"The volume here presented is very attractive. The Biography by Irving derives a great interest from the affectionate dignity with which a mother, not unworthy of such daughters, seems to have preserved the record of the development of the powers of mind, and graces of character, of her gifted and fated child; while the prose and poetical remains attest the taste and talent which a premature grave snatched from the world."—*New York American.*

THE POETICAL REMAINS OF THE LATE

LUCRETIA M. DAVIDSON,

Collected and Arranged by her Mother,

WITH A BIOGRAPHY BY MISS SEDGWICK,

In One handsome Volume, to match Irving's Biography of Margaret.

"We have read the contents of these volumes with serene and sober delight. They possess a charm which, to us, is irresistible, and which forbids the intrusion of any other feeling than one of respect, of wonder, or of love. The pieces in the volume now before us, (which is printed and bound in a style to correspond with the Remains of Margaret,) are mostly tinctured with the hue of melancholy; there are few of them that do not convey a moral; and many appear to have been written under the influence of serious impression and deep devotional feelings."—*Boston Courier.*

THE POETICAL WORKS OF

SIR WALTER SCOTT;

A fine edition, in Six Volumes, royal 12mo.

SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

PUBLISHED BY LEA & BLANCHARD;

Washington Irving's Works.

A NEW AND BEAUTIFUL EDITION OF

THE WORKS OF WASHINGTON IRVING,

EMBRACING

The Sketch Book, Knickerbocker's New York, Bracebridge Hall, Tales of a Traveller, The Conquest of Granada, The Alhambra;

In Three Royal Octavo Volumes, with a Portrait of the Author.

Each of the Works embraced in this edition may be had separately, in two volumes, 12mo.

THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS;

OR SCENES, INCIDENTS, AND ADVENTURES IN THE FAR WEST,

With Two large Maps. In Two Volumes.

ASTORIA;

Or Anecdotes of an Enterprise beyond the Rocky Mountains,

In Two Volumes.

A HISTORY OF THE LIFE AND VOYAGES OF

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS;

Revised and corrected by the Author. In Two Volumes, octavo.

THE CRAYON MISCELLANY;

Containing a Tour on the Prairies, Abbotsford and Newstead Abbey, Legends of the Conquest of Spain. In Three Volumes, 12 mo.

THE BEAUTIES OF WASHINGTON IRVING;

A small volume for the pocket, neatly done up in extra cloth.

SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

PUBLISHED BY LEA & BLANCHARD;

DICKENS'S WORKS COMPLETE.

BARNABY RUDGE,

WITH MANY BEAUTIFUL ILLUSTRATIONS,

Engraved by Yeager, together with over Fifty Illustrations on Wood; in One handsome Royal 8vo. Volume.

THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP,

With many additional Illustrations,

Engraved by Yeager, from Designs by Sibson. This edition contains, in all, upwards of One Hundred Illustrations.

POSTHUMOUS PAPERS OF THE PICKWICK CLUB,

WITH FORTY-FIVE ILLUSTRATIONS.

OLIVER TWIST;

Or The Parish-Boy's Progress,

With a new Preface, and Twenty-four Illustrations.

THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF

NICHOLAS NICKLEBY,

Containing a Portrait of the Author, engraved on Steel, and Thirty-nine Illustrations.

SKETCHES,

Illustrative of every-day Life and every-day People.

WITH TWENTY ILLUSTRATIONS.

All the above works are printed on fine paper—the Illustrations on tinted paper—and handsomely bound in embossed cloth, to match. Each work may be had separately.

Cheap editions of these works, without plates, are also published by Lea and Blanchard, and can be had of all booksellers.

THE PIC-NIC PAPERS,

By various hands. Edited by Charles Dickens, Esq., author of "Oliver Twist," Nicholas Nickleby," &c., in Two Volumes.

SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

PUBLISHED BY LEA & BLANCHARD;

A TEXT BOOK OF

PRACTICAL GEOLOGY AND MINERALOGY.

With instructions for the qualitative analysis of Minerals,

BY JOSHUA TRIMMER, F.G.S.,

WITH TWO HUNDRED AND TWELVE WOOD CUTS,

A handsome Octavo volume, bound in embossed cloth.

This is a systematic introduction to Mineralogy, and Geology, admirably calculated to instruct the student in those sciences. The organic remains of the various formations are well illustrated by numerous figures, which are drawn with great accuracy.

THE BRIDGEWATER TREATISES ON THE POWER, WISDOM AND GOODNESS OF GOD, as manifested in the Creation, containing Bell, Chalmers, Kidd, Whewell, Prout, Kirby, Roget and Buckland, with numerous engravings, wood cuts, and maps. The whole series forms a beautiful set of books, in 7 volumes, 8vo, to be had in handsome cloth or half bound with calf backs and corners.

The following Three Treatises can be had separately:

GEOLOGY AND MINERALOGY, considered with reference to Natural Theology, by the Rev. Wm. Buckland, D. D., Canon of Christ Church, and Reader in Geology and Mineralogy in the University of Oxford; with nearly 100 copper-plates and large coloured maps; a new edition, from the late London edition, with supplementary notes and additional plates.

ROGETS' ANIMAL AND VEGETABLE PHYSIOLOGY; with nearly 500 wood cuts, in two volumes; second American edition.

THE HISTORY, HABITS AND INSTINCTS OF ANIMALS; by Rev. Wm. Kirby, M. A., F. R. S.; illustrated by numerous copper-plate engravings.

A POPULAR TREATISE ON

VEGETABLE PHYSIOLOGY;

Published under the auspices of the Society for the Promotion of Popular Instruction;

WITH NUMEROUS WOOD CUTS,

In One Volume, 12mo.

THE MILLWRIGHT AND MILLER'S GUIDE. By Oliver Evans. The Tenth Edition with Additions and Corrections, by the Professor of Mechanics in the Franklin Institute of Pennsylvania; and a Description of an Improved Merchant Flour Mill. With Engravings. By C. & O. Evans, Engineers.

This is a practical work, and has had a very extended sale.

SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

PUBLISHED BY LEA & BLANCHARD;

THE SECOND SERIES OF MISS STRICKLAND'S LIVES OF THE QUEENS OF ENGLAND; containing Elizabeth of York, surnamed the Good Queen of Henry the VII., the Six Queens of Henry the VIII., and Queen Mary the First, in 2 vols., 12mo.

LORD BROUGHAM'S HISTORICAL SKETCHES OF STATESMEN WHO FLOURISHED IN THE TIME OF GEORGE III.—Containing Lord Chatham, Lord North, Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Canning, Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Grattan, Washington, Franklin, Charles Carroll, Napoleon, Talleyrand, Lafayette, &c., 2 vols. Fourth edition.

THE UNITED IRISHMEN, their Lives and Times, by R. R. Madden, M. D., author of Travels in the East, &c.; in two volumes, 12mo.

ROMANTIC BIOGRAPHY OF THE AGE OF ELIZABETH, or Sketches of Life from the By-ways of History by the Benedictine Brethren of Glendalough. Edited by W. Cook Taylor, LL. D. &c. of Trinity College, Dublin, author of "The Natural History of Society," in 2 volumes, 12mo.

LIVES OF EMINENT LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC MEN OF ITALY. By Mrs. Shelley, Sir David Brewster, James Montgomery and others. Containing Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Lorenzo de Medici, Galileo, Tasso, &c., &c., 2 vols.

A MEMOIR OF THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF MRS. HEMANS. By her Sister, Mrs. Hughes. 1 vol., 12mo.

THE MOST EMINENT FRENCH WRITERS. By Mrs. Shelley and others. Containing Racine, Fenelon, Rousseau, Molière, Corneile, &c., &c. 2 vols.

SKETCHES OF CONSPICUOUS LIVING CHARACTERS OF FRANCE. Containing Thiers, Chautesubriand, Laffitte, Guizot, La Martine, &c., &c. Translated by R. M. Walsh.

THE CRITICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS OF LORD BROUGHAM, with a sketch of his Character. Two vols., royal 12mo.

THE CRITICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS OF SIR EDWARD LYTTON BULWER, Author of "Pelham," "The Disowned," &c.

LIFE OF THOMAS JEFFERSON. By Prof. Tucker, of the University of Virginia; 2 vols., 8vo.

GEISLER'S TEXT BOOK OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY. Translated from the third German edition. By Francis Cunningham. 3 vols., 8vo.

AN INQUIRY INTO THE VALIDITY OF THE BRITISH CLAIM TO A RIGHT OF VISITATION AND SEARCH of American vessels suspected to be engaged in the African Slave Trade. By Henry Wheaton, LL. D., Minister of the United States at the Court of Berlin. Author of "Elements of International Law," &c. In one volume.

LOCKHART'S LIFE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT, a fine edition with a portrait, in 7 vols., 12mo.

THE COURT AND TIMES OF FREDERICK THE GREAT, edited with an introduction, by Thomas Campbell, Esq., author of the Pleasures of Hope, The Life of Petrarch, &c.; 2 vols., 12mo.

MADAME DE SEVIGNE AND HER CONTEMPORARIES, comprising sketches of above one hundred of the most eminent persons of her times, 2 vols., 12mo.

SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

PUBLISHED BY LEA & BLANCHARD;

MRS. ELLIS'S TEMPERANCE TALES, or Hints to those wh would Make Home Happy, by Mrs. Ellis, late Miss Stickney, auth of The Women of England, &c., &c. Containing—The Dangers o Dining Out, Confessions of a Maniac, Somerville Hall, The Risi Tide, The Favourite Child, First Impressions, and The Minister Family, in 2 vol., 12mo.

"The tendency of this work is one of the best and noblest, and the scen and persons described are, in most instances it is believed, Portraits, aimin as it does, at the correction of a too prevalent vice, that of intemperance, is expected to command, amongst the serious and thinking part of t community, the same popularity that Pickwick and Humphrey's Clo have done in their peculiar circle."—*Publishers Circular.*

KEBLE'S CHRISTIAN YEAR. Thoughts in verse, for Sundays a Holidays, throughout the year. The third edition, in one neat volum

THE CHILD'S CHRISTIAN YEAR. Hymns for every Sunday a Holiday, compiled for the use of Parochial schools, first American fro the second London edition, adapted more especially to pastoral and d mestic teachings; a small pocket volume to match the 'Christian Yea

BISHOP HEBER'S POETICAL WORKS. Complete in one sm volume, to match 'Keble's Christian Year.'

TALES AND SOUVENIRS OF A RESIDENCE IN EUROP By the Lady of a distinguished Senator of Virginia. In one volum extra embossed cloth.

THE QUEEN OF FLOWERS, OR MEMOIRS OF THE ROS a beautiful little volume, with coloured plates, and handsomely done with gilt edges.

THE SENTIMENTS OF FLOWERS, OR THE LANGUAG OF FLORA. Embracing an account of nearly 300 different Flow with their powers in Language. With coloured plates. A small volum embossed cloth, gilt edges.

THE LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS, with illustrative Poetry. which is now first added The Calendar of Flowers. Revised by t Editor of 'The Forget-Me-Not.' The sixth American edition, wi coloured plates. Handsomely done up in embossed leather, gilt edg

THE YOUNG WIFE'S BOOK. A Manual of religious, moral, a domestic duties. A small pocket volume.

THE YOUNG HUSBAND'S BOOK. A Manual of the duties, mor religious, and domestic, imposed by the relations of married life. small volume, to match 'The Young Wife's Book.'

STORIES FOR VERY YOUNG CHILDREN, illustrated by num ous wood cuts, containing Winter, Spring, Summer, and Autumn, Mrs. Marcet, author of Conversations on Chemistry.

LAWS OF ETIQUETTE, OR RULES AND REFLECTIO FOR CONDUCT IN SOCIETY. By a Gentleman. A sm pocket volume. Many thousands of which have been sold.

ETIQUETTE FOR THE LADIES. With Hints on the Preservati Improvement, and Display of Female Beauty. A small volume match the Laws of Etiquette.

THE CANONS OF GOOD BREEDING; by the author of 'T Laws of Etiquette;' a small pocket volume in embossed cloth.

SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

PUBLISHED BY LEA & BLANCHARD;

A LIBRARY EDITION OF THE

SELECT WORKS OF HENRY FIELDING,

WITH A MEMOIR OF THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY SIR WALTER SCOTT:

And an Essay on his Life and Genius, by ARTHUR MURPHY, Esq., with a Portrait. Bound in One or Two Volumes, and in various styles, to suit the Purchasers.

ALSO, TO MATCH THE ABOVE, THE

SELECT WORKS OF TOBIAS SMOLLET;

With a Memoir of the Life and Writings of the Author,

BY SIR WALTER SCOTT;

With a Portrait. Bound in One or Two Volumes, to match Fielding.

STANLEY THORN,

BY HENRY COCKTON,

Author of "Valentine Vox, the Ventriloquist," &c., with numerous Illustrations, designed by Cruikshank, Leech, &c., and Engraved by Yeager. In one Royal Octavo Volume, bound in embossed cloth.

THE PORCELAIN TOWER;

OR NINE STORIES OF CHINA;

Compiled from original sources; with Illustrations. In One Volume.

GUY FAWKES;

OR, THE GUNPOWDER TREASON;

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE,

BY WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH,

Author of "The Tower of London," "Jack Sheppard," &c., in One Volume, 8vo., with Plates.

BEAUCHAMPE, OR THE KENTUCKY TRAGEDY, by the Author of "Richard Hurdis," &c., in Two Volumes, 12mo.

CONFESSIONS, OR THE BLIND HEART, by the Author of "The Kinsmen, &c., &c., in Two Volumes, 12mo.

ROB OF THE BOWL, A Legend of St. Inigoes, by the Author of "Horse Shoe Robinson," in Two Volumes, 12mo.

THE DAMSEL OF DARIEN, by the Author of "The Yemassee," "Guy Rivers," &c., in Two Volumes, 12mo.

THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN DAY, by the Author of "Nick of the Woods," &c., in Two Volumes, 12mo.

SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

PUBLISHED BY LEA & BLANCHARD;

WORKS FOR
SCHOOLS, COLLEGES, &C.

A NEW EDITION OF

ARNOTT'S ELEMENTS OF PHYSICS, OR NATURAL PHILOSOPHY, GENERAL AND MEDICAL. Written for universal use, in plain, or non-technical language. Complete in 1 vol. Revised and corrected from the last English edition, with additions, by Isaac Hays, M. D. A work used extensively in various seminaries.

HERSCHEL'S ASTRONOMY, a new edition, with a preface, and a Series of Questions for the examination of Students, with Engravings, by S. C. Walker, in 1 vol., 12mo.

BREWSTER'S OPTICS, a new edition, with an appendix, and numerous cuts, by Professor Bache, in 1 vol., 12mo.

BUTLER'S ATLAS OF ANCIENT GEOGRAPHY, consisting of 21 coloured maps, with a complete accentuated index.

BUTLER'S GEOGRAPHIA CLASSICA, or the Application of Ancient Geography to the Classics; 4th American edition, with Questions, 1 vol.

Bolmar's French Series.

New editions of the following works, by A. Bolmar, forming in connection with "Bolmar's Levizac," a complete series for the acquisition of the French language.

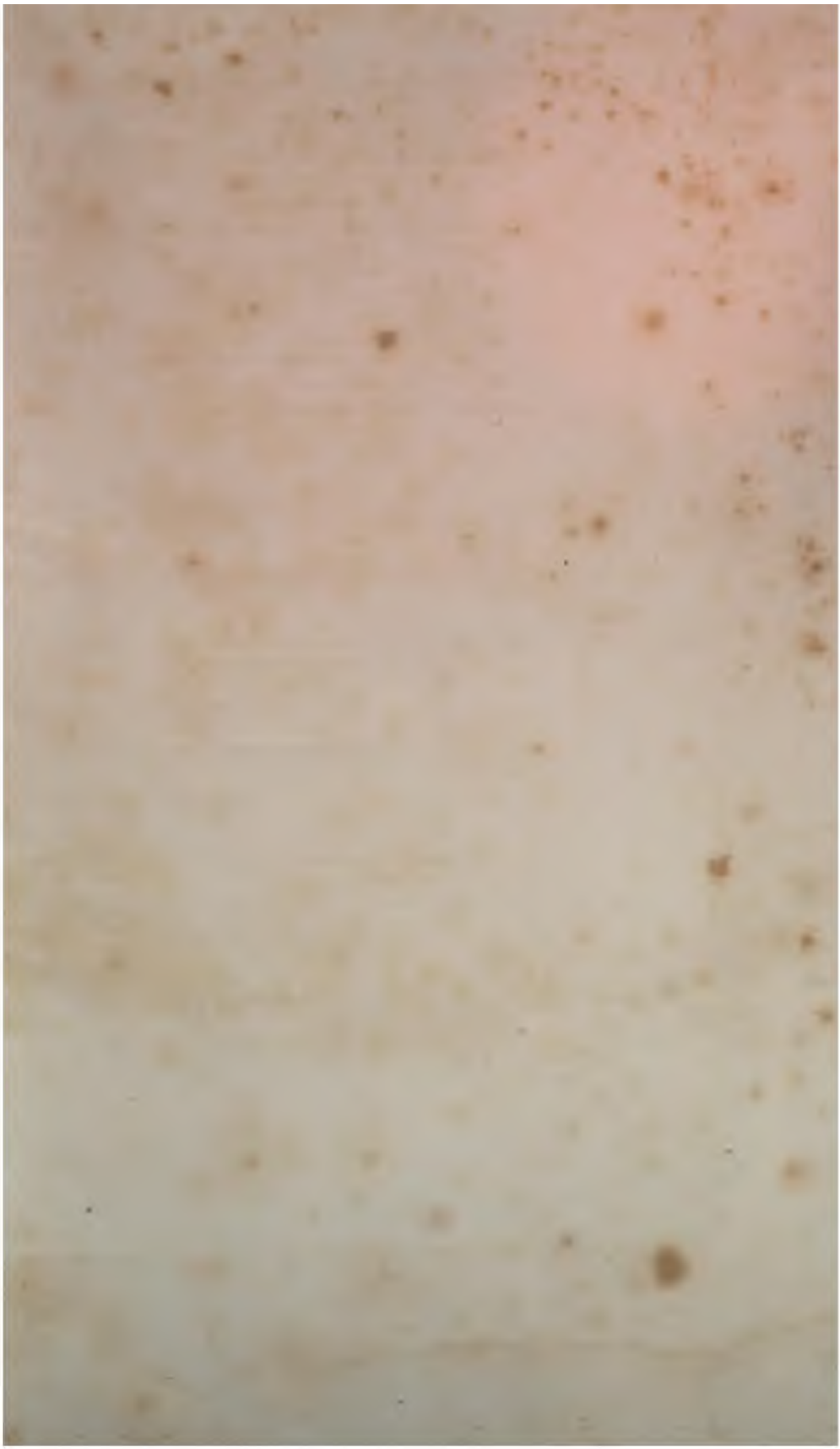
A SELECTION OF ONE HUNDRED PERRIN'S FABLES, accompanied by a Key, containing the text, a literal and free translation, arranged in such a manner as to point out the difference between the French and English idiom, &c., in 1 vol., 12mo.

A COLLECTION OF COLLOQUIAL PHRASES, on every topic necessary to maintain conversation, arranged under different heads with numerous remarks on the peculiar pronunciation and uses of various words; the whole so disposed as considerably to facilitate the acquisition of a correct pronunciation of the French, 1 vol., 18mo.

LES AVENTURES DE TELEMAQUE PAR FENELON, in 1 vol., 12mo., accompanied by a Key to the first eight books, in 1 vol., 12mo., containing like the Fables, the text, a literal and free translation, intended as a sequel to the Fables. Either volume sold separately.

ALL THE FRENCH VERBS, both regular and irregular, in a small volume.

SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.





Stanford University Libraries
3 6105 015 001 444

DA
933
.M8
184
v.1

STANFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
CECIL H. GREEN LIBRARY
STANFORD, CALIFORNIA 94305-6004
(415) 723-1493

All books may be recalled after 7 days

DATE DUE

APR 20 1997

28D APR 1997

